

AN
E S S A Y
ON
P R A Y E R,
THE
NATURE, METHOD, and IMPORTANCE,
of that D U T Y.

In T W O P A R T S.

P A R T I.

Of the Nature of Prayer, and the Motives to it;

W H E R E I N

The Objections of some modern Authors to the Efficacy of P R A Y E R are particularly considered :

W I T H

Some REMARKS on the peculiar Advantages and Expediency of *pre-composed* FORMS of P R A Y E R, and of such as are termed *extempore* P R A Y E R S, &c.

P A R T II.

Contains the METHOD of P R A Y E R, with suitable Forms of Expression adapted to each distinct Part.

T O W H I C H A R E A D D E D,

A Variety of SPECIMENS of P R A Y E R, as delivered by several eminent Dissenting Ministers in L O N D O N; many on special Occasions, taken in S H O R T - H A N D, by the E D I T O R.

L O N D O N :

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M D C C L X.

P R A Y E R



P R E F A C E.

AS there are already many Books wrote on the Subject and Duty of Prayer, by Men of great Learning and Piety, any other Treatise on this Subject may be thought unnecessary, and that it is, at least, improbable any Attempt of this Nature will be more agreeable to the Truth, the Nature of the Duty, and the general Benefit of Mankind.

I have, nevertheless, thought such a Work as this highly expedient, for Reasons which will occur in the Sequel; and though I have not adapted any Person's Plan, or Design, I freely acknowledge to have received much Assistance, in the Prosecution of it, from a great Variety of pious and ingenious Authors of different Denominations, whose Names are well known to the Christian Protestant Church.

In the former Part of this Work I have treated on the Nature, Pre-requisites and Motives to Prayer, which I apprehend correspondent with the Sentiments of Christians in general, till I proceed to consider the End of Prayer, or its Efficacy with the Deity: But, in this Particular, though I have the Pleasure to find some ingenious Gentlemen of the same Opinion, I find

many others (especially modern Writers) widely differing. This has been a Matter of no small Concern to me, and has naturally led me to suspect my own Judgment, to suspend my Determination, and make more mature Enquiry. But the Consequence has been more firmly to establish me in my former Sentiments, rather than to convince me of my being in an Error, and my Regard to Truth has engaged me to enter upon this Subject, and to oppose such Arguments to their Objections as were naturally suggested to me.

That I might be the more impartial, I have taken three Extracts from the Writings of some Divines on the negative Side of the Question.

The First is from the late Dr. JAMES FOSTER, whose exalted Abilities, and most amiable Virtues, render his Memory dear to me; and tho' I differ from him in this Point, relative to Prayer, his Sermons and Discourses I always highly and justly admired, and his Offices of Devotion are peculiarly noble, rational, and sublime; and from thence I freely acknowledge to have selected many of those beautiful Expressions that embellish my Collection.

The Second is from Dr. WILLIAM LEACHMAN, Professor of Divinity, in the University of *Glasgow*. I also mention him with Veneration; and though I vary from him in this Point, I read his Works with the greatest Pleasure, and recommend them with real Sincerity.

The third Extract is from Mr. WEST's Treatise on this Subject, wherein the Author has adopted the same Sentiments, and has endeavoured

P R E F A C E.

voured to establish it by a large Paraphrase and Explanation of the Lord's Prayer; and though I cannot agree with him in Sentiments, he appears to be a Gentleman of Seriousness, Candour and Ingenuity. I am, therefore, entirely free from the least Prejudice, in what I have objected to them. But wherein they appear to be mistaken, it is highly necessary their Errors should be exploded, lest the Influence of their Names should give a Sanction to them, and make them pass as certain and unquestionable Truths. If I have, therefore, conceived such Authors inconsistent with themselves, or with what I apprehend to be true, I have treated them with a Deference suitable to their Characters, while I have endeavoured to shew the Inconclusiveness of their Reasoning.

As the Prevalency of Prayer appears to be, at least, the Doctrine of Scripture, I have endeavoured to illustrate the true Sense of many Passages, both those which are brought in Favour of it, or urged as Objections against it.

And, as the Efficacy of Prayer has not only been objected to from some Texts of Scripture, viz. *God is of one Mind; who can turn him?* Job xx. 13. *In him is no Variableness, nor Shadow of Turning,* James i. 17. But is also rejected by others on Principles of Reason, I have endeavoured to search into the Weight of their Objections; and lest they should appear to me of less Consequence than they really are, I have examined the Sentiments of other Writers on this Subject; and I freely own, in answering these Objections, I have made some Extracts

from the Rev. Mr. FLEMING's *Answer to Mr. CHUB's Vindication of his True Gospel*, &c. tho' it never came to my Hand till since I had wrote my Manuscript.

I readily grant, if the Prevalency of Prayer is inconsistent with Reason, it cannot be the Doctrine of Scripture; but, on the other Hand, if it be made appear to be a Scripture Doctrine, it will follow, that it cannot be inconsistent with Reason; and though all Arguments in Support of the Affirmative cannot be equally conclusive, it is sufficient to my Purpose, if they are so upon the whole, and that the Arguments drawn from Scripture and Reason are naturally connected, consistent, and uniformly tend to evince the Truth thereof; which will, I hope, be clear from the following Pages. The Support of this Truth I conceive to be of great Importance to animate Christians in this Duty; and that the contrary Supposition must, in the Judgment of many, render it a Matter of Indifference.

Having thus far prosecuted my Design, in Regard to the Nature and consequent Advantages of this Duty, I proceed to represent the comparative Difference and Advantages of pre-composed and extempore Prayer; wherein I have endeavoured to set all the Arguments for pre-composed Forms of Prayer, in a just and impartial View, and to shew their Usefulness and Expedience, and likewise to represent the Advantages of extempore Prayer; in doing which, I have considered the Nature of the Duty itself, and how far divine Authority countenances human Laws, in this Particular;

lar *; and afterwards I have subjoined some Remarks on the Language, or Phraseology, fitly adapted to it.

I then proceed to the second Part, *viz.* The Method of Prayer, and to exhibit Specimens of the several Parts, whereby the Mind may be assisted in the Performance of this Duty.

But, perhaps, it will be objected, that such a Method as this, of assisting the Mind, is inconsistent with the Nature of this Duty, as it is a spiritual Service, and ought entirely to proceed from the Heart; and that prescribing Rules is limiting, or not sufficiently depending on the Spirit's Office. To which I answer, though I doubt not of the divine Assistance to excite us to this Duty, and aid us in it; yet I conceive this is to be expected, in the Use of proper Means; external Advantages are afforded us, and required to be improved; and Experience, I apprehend, may suggest to many good Men, that, notwithstanding they may sometimes enjoy the lively Exercise of devout Affections, by the Communications of divine Assistance to the Mind, inditing apt and suitable Expressions in their Intercourse with Heaven, they, at other Times, find themselves stand greatly in Need of external Helps: The Mind is not always prepared to imbibe and enjoy the Influences of

* I have purposely avoided saying more on the Subject of prescribed Forms, lest I should be led to make some Reflections on our present established Liturgy: I think sufficient has been said by the Authors of the *Free and Candid Disquisitions on the Book of Common Prayer*, and also in the Book entitled, *The Expediency and Necessity of Revising and Improving the Public Liturgy*—and in the *Christian Liturgy*, published 1741, the *Consistent Protestant*, &c. &c.

divine Grace, this being most likely to be experienced to the best Purpose, when by previous suitable Meditation their Minds are laid open to the Impression of heavenly and divine Things.

—Besides, as there are Occasions that require Enlargement in some Parts of Prayer, so there are many Occurrences that tend to discompose us; bodily Pain and Disorders, Disappointments, external Objects, and oftentimes Ideas, very unaccountably intrude upon the Mind, whereby the inventive Faculties are checked and restrained: These Helps are therefore intended to free the Mind from those Impediments, which the World very often presents, and too easily fixes there; and, in such Cases, to furnish it with Matter and Expressions adapted to every important Occasion.

Not that it is proposed as necessary to every Prayer to go through every Part of it, the various Occasions that present themselves may make it highly expedient, at Times, to enlarge on some Part, and even omit others.

And, notwithstanding many Persons object to Set Forms of Prayer, I think I may submit it to the Consciences of such Persons, whether these, or such like Helps, are not wisely made use of, when a Person may find himself indisposed for the Duty without them.

In this Work, I have endeavoured to exhibit a general System of Prayer; the reading and meditating on some Part of which, it is apprehended, will assist the Mind for the more profitable Discharge of this Duty, in public or private.—The Method I have proposed is, I presume, peculiarly adapted to this End. The

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Specimens I have given of Expressions in the several Parts, I have not altogether chosen to express in the Language of Scripture, nor wholly omitted it, as neither is essential to the Duty; but I have aimed at Variety, taken from the Lips and Works of ingenious Men. It is probable, that some of the Expressions interspersed may more immediately suit the Taste, and reach the Hearts of some Persons, so as to lead them more delightfully to practice this Duty, and have their Hearts wrought upon in consequence of it, whilst others may be better adapted to the Understanding and Capacities of Christians in general.

But more particularly, as in the Prosecution of this Work, I have had some View to the Assistance of young Ministers, those especially in the Country, who may not have had the Advantages which are commonly enjoyed in this City; so I have seen Reason to recommend some Regulations, with respect to Method.

The Order in which I have ranged the several Heads which constitute the Method of Prayer, are as follows: Invocation, Adoration, Thanksgiving, Confession, Petition, Intercession, Pleading, Self-Dedication, and Ascription.

In the Part of Invocation I have given Specimens of calling upon God, agreeable to the general Forms; as, *Our Father who art in Heaven*, &c. and have added some Forms of intermediate Address; as, *We intreat, Oh merciful Father; We beseech thee, of thine infinite Goodness*, &c.

In the Part of Adoration I have attempted to express our Ideas of the amiable, glorious
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Perfections of the Deity, either in the most significant and beautiful Scripture Language, or other sublime and elegant Phrases; yet I hope not ambiguous, reserving and comprizing in one Chapter Specimens of the more lofty and sublime Ideas and Expressions on some philosophical Subjects; such as may very fitly be made the Subject of Meditation, especially by Men of Literature, and in their more private Retirement be adopted in their devotional Exercises, though I cannot recommend them as proper to introduce in public Assemblies.

In the Thanksgiving, I have endeavoured, by adapting great Variety of Expression under each respective Head, to extend the Ideas, and excite the Gratitude of the Worshipper.

In my Expressions under the Head of Confession, I have endeavoured they should be natural and rational, consistent with the State and Circumstances of frail, dependent, guilty Creatures, yet intelligent and moral Agents, and with the Experience of Men in general, and consequently suited to public or private Prayer: If there are any Exceptions in this Particular, I apprehend it is under the Head of the Aggravations of Sin, which may be varied, or omitted, at Discretion.

In the petitionary Part (which I have placed next to Confession) I have intended to introduce in the first Place, such Requests as may most naturally follow, and to range the several subsequent Divisions in a consistent, well-connected Order.

With Respect to Intercession, I have exhibited great Variety of Expressions, adapted not
only

only to the more common and ordinary, but occasional and extraordinary Cases.

Pleading with God is chiefly relative to this Part of Prayer, I have therefore given Specimens in Reference thereto, though I have not wholly omitted such as are more limited. We have frequent Instances in Scripture of this Kind, to encourage the Children of God to plead their Dedication of themselves to him—Their Covenant ratified and confirmed—Their Interest in *Jesus Christ*—Their Sincerity and Integrity of Soul in the Worship of God—Their Trust and Confidence in his Mercy, in his Promises, and Faithfulness—And from the essential, immutable Perfections of his Nature, to urge their Hope, and derive an inexhaustible Source of Joy and Comfort to their Souls.

With Respect to Ascription, those Forms of Expression I have adopted are some of them very short, though generally comprehensive, and others more full and expressive; they are sometimes in Scripture Phrase, at others in the Language of some ingenious modern Divines; which bespeak a Mind expanded and enlarged with the most ardent and devout Affections, elevated by the powerful, influencing Sense of supreme Perfection, eternal and immutable.

Throughout the Whole, I hope I have not been too much biassed by my own private Opinions, many Persons have not been of the same Sentiments with myself, who have had an happy Flow of Expression in this Duty, many of whose Beauties I have adopted; nor would I exclude some darling Expressions in the Mouths of some Persons, though they are not of a Piece with
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some others. This, I own, I could not but hesitate about; but I was, at length, determined by this Consideration, that the Exclusion of them would not only be less charitable, but render the Work less useful.

Another Thing in which I have been somewhat singular is, that I have particular Sections between each Head of Prayer, for apt and proper Expressions as Transition from one Part to the other; this I by no Means insist on as necessary, but as an easy and natural Ornament, and therefore worthy of Regard.

Here I must take Notice likewise, of what I have for a long Time apprehended an Impropriety, in the too general Scheme or Method of our public Prayers, *viz.* That, in many Societies, their Worship does not begin with Prayer; but, after Reading or Singing, they proceed to Prayer. When they enlarge on the several Parts of what is denominated Prayer and Intercession, and thereby protract it to much greater Length than is agreeable to the chief Part of the Audience, few, if any, can preserve their Attention, or maintain a devout Frame of Mind for so considerable a Time.—I would, therefore, beg Leave to recommend, that Prayer begin the Solemnity in all worshipping Assemblies: The first Prayer may properly consist of acknowledging God as the supreme Object of religious Worship, professing of our Desire and Design to worship him, and invoking his Assistance and Acceptance, with a few other general Petitions, Ascriptions, &c. as infinitely better fitted to bring the Mind into a proper Disposition for publick Worship, than either Reading or Singing.

ing. — When reading the Scripture, and singing the Psalm or Hymn, is ended, the Prayer then preceding the Sermon may very properly consist in an Enlargement on the Parts of Adoration, Thanksgiving, Confession, and Petition: And the concluding Prayer after Sermon, methinks, should comprehend and include in it some general Expressions in the Parts of Adoration, or Thanksgiving, or both; some Petitions adapted to the Time, Occasion, or particular Subject before insisted on, and likewise entirely include the Part of Intercession for others. This would not only render each Prayer of a more agreeable Length; but, I apprehend, subserve the important Purpose of improving our Devotion. Some Specimens of Prayer, at the latter End, are therefore adapted to this Plan.

I am sensible I have ventured on this Publication, without asking Leave of the Ministers in general, with whom I have taken this Freedom; my Unacquaintance with many prevented my Application, and the Modesty of others I was apprized would deprive me of their Consent. As I make Use of no Names, so I am conscious I have no Design to misrepresent or derogate from the Excellence of their stated or occasional Prayers; and, I can truly say, so far as I have embellished this Work with the Expressions of our most celebrated Divines, it has been with a Design to recommend this Duty by the most amiable Dress, and introduce a more general Practice of it with greater Ease and Delight. I hope, for these Reasons, those Ministers will excuse, if not commend my Attempt.

Here I think it my Duty to acknowledge the
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Favour of some Ministers, who knew my Intention, and assented freely to the Publication of their Prayers I had taken from their Lips, and favoured me with their own Revival.

After all, I do not expect to pass uncensured; some Christians, who may, perhaps, differ from me in Sentiment, may explode what they may esteem Error, or the Critic may point out Inaccuracies, &c. with Respect to the former, I am open to Conviction. As to the latter friendly Hints will be regarded, should the Work undergo a second Edition; and those that are merely sarcastical, I shall think unworthy Notice; but, while some may censure my Sentiments, or others my Style, I hope many will receive Improvement.

I would farther premise, that as this Work was printed off to Page 225 before the Decease of his late gracious Majesty (of glorious Memory) there are a few Expressions that may be varied by the judicious Reader, better to adapt them to the Accession of his present Majesty King GEORGE III. besides those, I had the Opportunity of correcting. That his Reign might be long and prosperous, exercised with Righteousness and Lenity, with Dignity and Honour, over a free, a flourishing, a grateful, and happy People, is the ardent Prayer of every true *Briton*, and of their humble Servant,

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The EDITOR.

E R R A T A.

Page 1, after Part I. add Chap. I. P. 9, for 6, read 9; P. 93, Line 17, for Reason, read Reader; P. 97, after them, add Chap. V. P. 96, L. 6, after live in, add Neglect of; P. 154, L. 25, for and, read of; from P. 101 to 144 inclusive, for Observations, &c. read Method of Prayer.

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T R E A T I S E
O N
P R A Y E R.

P A R T I.

Of the Nature of Prayer, and the Motives to it.

P RAYER, in a strict and limited Sense, signifies Petition only ; but in a more large and extensive View, it means the Address or Application of a dependent Creature to his Creator, supreme Governor and Benefactor ; and comprehends or contains in it the different Subjects on which the Mind is employed in its Addresses to Heaven. “ When we celebrate his Perfections, it is called *Adoration*. When we bewail our Sins with Sorrow and full Purposes of Amendment, it is called *Confession*. When we implore God’s Mercy, and desire any Favour from him, it is stiled *Petition*. When for the averting any Evil, *Supplication*. When we express a grateful Sense of Benefits received, it is called *Thanksgiving*. When we beg any Thing for others, it is stiled *Intercession* *.” Another Author defines it “ a Request or Desire, especially such

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* Rev. Mr. Nathaniel Ball’s Sermons, p. 160.

as is made to Almighty God *: “ ’Tis likewise explained to be Petition to Heaven, entreaty, or submissive Importunity, &c †.” Mr. *Cruden* says, “ the word Prayer comes from a Term in the *Hebrew*, which “ signifies Appeal, Interpolation, Intercession, &c. whereby we refer our own Cause and that of others unto God, as Judge. He calls it the Work of the believing Soul, desiring of God alone Things lawful and needful, with Confidence to obtain them thro’ the Mediation of Jesus Christ, to the Praise of the Truth, and Mercy and Power of God ‡”. Another ingenious Author says, it is primarily the Act of the Soul, or devout Affections of the Mind, expressed in ardent Desire to God, after some Good not enjoyed, but wished for. Lastly, I have heard it defined to be a solemn Wish, directed to God, in Confidence of his Mercy, &c. I am the more particular in the Definition of Prayer, because, according to some prevailing Sentiments, that Part denominated Petition should be left out; since it is said, the most lawful and needful Request, ever so suitably offered, is of no Efficacy with God, which will be considered in its proper Place.

// Prayer is either public, or private mental, or vocal, stated or ejaculatory, and occasional: It may be practised by precomposed Forms, or *ex tempore*, in which ever View Prayer is considered: It is of a divine and spiritual Nature, and the proper indispensable Duty of a rational dependent Creature. Farther, to illustrate the Nature of this Duty particularly, consider and obviate the Objections to the Efficacy of Prayer, and to inforce the Practice of it, is the principal Design of this Part; but I shall first take Notice of what may be esteemed

* Mr. *Bailey*.
Concordance.

† Mr. *Johnson*.

‡ Mr. *Cruden*’s

The pre-requisite Qualifications for rendering Prayer an acceptable Service to the Almighty, and for procuring his gracious Answer.

I. The first of these I shall mention is Faith in the Being, Perfections, and Promises of God; according to that, *Heb. xi. 6. He that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a Rewarder of all them that diligently seek him, and James i. 6. Let him ask in Faith; and Matt. xxi. 22. All Things whatsoever ye shall ask in Prayer believing ye shall receive.* This implies, that an humble Reliance and steady Trust in God for Aid and Protection, the natural Result of Faith in him, is necessary to render our Prayers acceptable to him, and that without such a *Faith it is impossible to be approved of God.*

II. Love to God, or that pure and rational Affection which naturally arises from a Contemplation of the divine Character, or the Perfections of his Nature displayed in the Order and Harmony of the Universe, his Beneficence and Favour towards us, and his universal Benevolence.

III. Humility in the Sense of our own Unworthiness, our Subjection to God, our constant Dependence on him, and our Obligations to him. *For he regardeth the Cry of the Humble, Psalm ix. 12—17.*

IV. Forgiveness of others; this our Lord has taught us in that Form of Prayer he gave to his Disciples, saying, Forgive us our Trespases as we forgive them that trespass against us; and *Matt. vi. 12. If thou stand Praying forgive. Mark xi. 25. and Matt. v. 23, 24. If thou bring thy Gift to the Altar, and there rememberest that thy Brother hath aught against thee, go first, and be reconciled to thy Brother, then come and offer thy Gift.*

V. Asking for such Things as are good and lawful in themselves, and with due Submission to the divine Will.

Will. *Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss; that ye may consume it upon your Lust,* James iv. 3. And when our Lord prays, saying, *Father, if it be possible, let this Cup pass from me;* he adds, *nevertheless not my Will but thine be done,* Matt. xxvi. 42.

VI. A benevolent, kind and affectionate Love to all Mankind, implying a Desire to subserve the general and universal Good, is a Disposition requisite to this Duty, 1 *Tim.* ii. 1, 2.

VII. We are to pray with great Seriousness and Deliberation, with a dutiful and modest Submission to the divine Will: This is naturally adapted to the Design and Solemnity of the Duty, and to the Presence in which we then place ourselves. Thus Solomon advises, *Be not rash with thy Mouth, and let not thine Heart be hasty to utter any thing before God; God is in Heaven, thou upon Earth, therefore let thy Words be few,* Eccl. v. 2.

VIII. Bearing in our Minds the proper *Ends* of Prayer, making them the *Aim* of our Prayers, and resolving with the utmost Care to perform our Part towards obtaining the Things prayed for. This is plainly and pathetically argued, 2 *Chron.* Chap. vi. This is implied in the Performance of the Duty itself, as we therein implore the divine Assistance to improve those Abilities and Advantages we enjoy, suitably to the Duty and Obligation we are under.

IX. Asking in the Name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. This is the Duty and Privilege of Christians, *John* xiv. 13, 14. *Whatsoever ye shall ask in my Name, I will do it;* and *John* xvi. 24. *Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my Name. Ask, and ye shall receive; that your Joy may be full.* And, *through him we both have an Access, by one Spirit, unto the Father,* Ephes. ii. 18.

X. Our

X. Our Prayers must be frequent, and our Devotions constant and uniform. The Ends for which God enjoins this Duty are of such Weight and Consequence, as to demand our willing and diligent Exercise thereof. Our Lord's Example enforces this, who was very frequent and fervent therein, and spake a Parable, to this End, that *Men ought always to pray, and not to faint*, Luke xviii. 1—7. *Continue instant in Prayer*, Rom. xii. 12.

XI. A sincere Endeavour after Purity of Heart and Life: The greater Advances any one makes in a Course of Virtue and Religion, the more likely will his Prayers be to obtain Acceptance with God. *The Lord is nigh to all that call upon him. To all that call upon him in Truth, he will fulfil the Desire of them that fear him*, Psal. xlv. 19. *If any Man be a Worshipper of God, and doth his Will, him he heareth*, John iv. 10. And Solomon, Prov. xv. 8. *The Prayer of the Upright is his Delight. But if I regard Iniquity in my Heart, the Lord will not hear me*, Psal. lxvi. 18.

What Degree of Defect in any of these will hinder the divine Acceptance, is a Question I shall not presume to answer; I only premise these as Qualifications both agreeable to Scripture and Reason, and in their Nature suitable and proper for the Acceptance of our Prayers; and what is our Wisdom, and Interest to seek after. I shall proceed therefore to mention some of the Grounds and Reasons, Motives and Obligations to Prayer.

S E C T. I.

P R A Y E R is a Duty founded in Nature. The very Notion of a Deity implies in it an undeniable and unalienable Title to Worship, Prayer and Praise. The transcendent Excellencies of his Nature bespeak and demand them of us. The various Displays of his Perfection in the wonderful

Structure of the Universe, with all the Creatures that inhabit the same; his providential Care over, and Government thereof, in which infinite Wisdom and universal Goodness are so conspicuous, afford Demonstration of this Duty of Prayer, and very affecting Motives to influence us thereunto. Considering God as the sole Author of our Beings, and, in the most absolute Sense, our Father; and that we necessarily depend on him for all the Mercies we enjoy or wish for, as well as our happy Deliverance from those Evils which we neither can foresee nor prevent; and his All-sufficiency and Readiness to hear and help us suitably to our Wants. The natural Voice of Reason cannot fail of dictating this Duty, as indispensable to Man, who, by the Dignity of his natural Faculties and his Speech, which is called his Glory, is hereby enabled, and on many Accounts infinitely obliged to join in this divine Exercise, in the solemn Acts of Prayer and Praise.

An ingenious Author* says, "There is in the Mind of Man a certain Propensity to religious Worship; a natural Tendency in the Soul to fly to some superior Being for Succour in Danger and Distress, Gratitude to an invisible superintendant Being, upon receiving any extraordinary and unexpected Good; the Acts of Love and Adoration which naturally result from the Mention of the divine Perfections; and the universal Concurrence of all Nations under Heaven therein, plainly shew, that religious Worship is conformable to the natural Light of Reason." So that Prayer seems to have its Foundation in Nature, to be connected and interwoven with our very Frame, and has met with the concurring Assent of all Nations in all Ages, even the most ignorant and barbarous; it is wisely adapted to our Natures and Capacities; and from the whole, must evidently appear to be incumbent on Man, as resulting from, and suited to, his derived, limited, and dependent State, his Imperfection and Guilt.

* Mr. Addison.

S E C T.

S E C T. II.

TH E Command and Authority of God has challenged it at our Hands. *If I be a Father, where is my Honour?* Mal. i. 6. It was early enjoin'd on the Jews under the Term *Worship*, Deut. xxvi. 10. *Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.* And this self-evident Proposition, that God is the sole Creator, the universal Governor, and absolute Proprietor of all Things, is an indubitable Argument of his Right to the Homage of his Creatures. 'Tis the Language of God by the Prophet, *Look unto me, and be saved, all the Ends of the Earth; for I am God, and there is none else*, Isai. xlv. 22. And under the Gospel Dispensation, Prayer is often enjoined, and earnestly inculcated. Our Saviour very early, as well as frequently taught his Disciples *to watch and pray*; and even enforced their frequent or constant Practice of it, not only by his positive Command, and his own Example, but by Parable, representing it as a natural Duty, and as prevalent too with their heavenly Father, *Luke xviii. He spake a Parable to this End, that Men ought always to pray, and not to faint.* And for this Reason also, our Lord exhibited a Plan, or Directory, to his Disciples, and others after them, to pray: And the Apostle Paul recommends it as an indispensable Obligation on all Men, from the Authority of God, who has required, that *in every Thing, by Prayer and Supplication, with Thanksgiving, Men make known their Wants unto God*, Phil. iv. 6. And to be constant and unwearied in the same. *Continue in Prayer*, Col. iv. 2. *Pray without ceasing*, 1 Thess. v. 17. And that this Command is not an arbitrary Injunction, but founded on the highest Reason and Fitness of Things, from its useful Tendency, and therefore of higher Obligation, will probably appear if we consider.

S E C T. III.

THE End and Design of God herein, and here to use the Language of a late Author, "The Design of God in appointing this Duty, must be solely the Benefit of the Creature. For as God is absolutely and independently perfect, and as he is completely happy in the Enjoyment of himself, he can have no Motive or Inducement on his own Account; and consequently, God's End in requiring this Duty, must be wholly and solely the Benefit of his Creatures; that it may be a Means to work on Mens Minds a lively Sense of the Sovereignty and Power, of the Knowledge and Wisdom, of the Holiness, Truth and Faithfulness of the Mercy, Goodness and Loving-kindness of the Lord; and that it may draw forth their Souls in filial Fear, Hope and Trust, Love, Delight and Joy in God, and create a just Concern to please him, by putting on that Purity and Piety, Humility and Charity, which is the Spirit and Practice of true Christianity. And it is with these Views, and on these Accounts, that God enjoins the frequent Exercise of this Duty; that the Minds of Men, being habitually seasoned with a Sense of himself, may produce in them suitable Affections, a suitable Frame and Temper of Mind, accompanied by a suitable Practice and Conversation", therefore made the Condition of obtaining what we need.

S E C T. IV.

I Shall attempt to illustrate this, by shewing more particularly, that the natural Tendency and Result of the frequent Exercise of this Duty exactly correspond with, and shew the Wisdom of the divine Command.

First it may be observed, that Prayer is indeed a Duty of a large Extent, and very copious in all its Parts. It comprehends in it almost the whole of our Reli-

Religion, or Piety towards God. 'Tis indeed the primary Part of divine Worship, and the Essence of Religion itself. Whilst we invoke God, as the Object of all religious Homage, acknowledge, celebrate, and adore his absolute Perfections; whilst we profess ourselves derived from, and dependent on him; declare our Subjection to, and continual Obligation unto him, as our Creator, Preserver, and Governor; whilst we confess our Unworthiness and Demerits, implore his Pardon, profess our sincere Contrition for past Sins, and declare our solemn, unfeigned Resolution, of being more devoted to his Service, and more fully obedient to him for the future; whilst in a truly humble Sense of our Frailty, we most religiously refer ourselves to his Care, and profess our Hope and Confidence, in all the most copious Views of rational and immortal Souls, to be founded on his unchangeable Goodness; and our Prayers being accompanied with suitable Dispositions of Mind, we do Honour to the divine Perfections; we feel our Passions warmed, as it were, with heavenly Fire, to dispose us to Seriousness and Attention, and to awaken and establish in our Minds an holy Awe and Reverence of God; to fill us with a filial Fear, and even to impress on our Minds such distinct and extensive Apprehensions of the divine Perfections, as are the just Foundation of a religious Life, and tend to produce such prevailing, conducting Principles of Action, as are suitable to a rational and accountable Creature. Oh! how admirably is Prayer adapted to Exercise, and improve all those Graces in which Religion consists, and whereon the Credit and Comfort of it depend! but, more particularly,

Prayer tends to inflame our Minds with Love to God, as the Author of our Beings, and Source of all our Happiness; and in the wonderful Display of his infinite Perfections in the natural and moral World. In these Acts we are led to the most copious and amiable Views of the divine Excellence: In the most admirable

mirable Instances and excellent Effects of his Creation, Providence and Government, we are naturally induced to admire him as the greatest, and to love him as the best of all Beings. If we consider God as our Creator, and Father, whose Design in creating us was the communicating Happiness to us, and the continual Repetition of whose Favour is the Support of our Beings; when, by the Exercise of this Duty, we frequently address the divine Majesty in the Sense of our renewed Mercies, and endeavour to recollect all possible Circumstances, whereby the Favour is increased, and our Obligation consequent thereon: How naturally does it tend to beget Love to God, and even excite the most ingenuous Acknowledgments, and most grateful Sensations we are capable of! — Inspired with Love, filled with Gratitude, we exult with Joy in the Privilege of a free Access to him, and in the Pleasure and Happiness we enjoy by this divine Intercourse.

And as the Acts of Adoration and Praise tend to excite, as well as to express Thankfulness; so the Sense of our Unworthiness tends to beget Repentance, the Confession of Sin, and the Profession of Sorrow on Account of it. Laying ourselves low before the Footstool of his sacred Majesty, and with Sincerity and Humility acknowledging our Weakness, Folly and Guilt; and our consequent Unworthiness of his Mercies, which we constantly need; that we have exposed ourselves to his just Displeasure, has a very natural Tendency, I had almost said cannot fail to keep us humble afterwards, and influence us, in some Measure, to every other consequent Act and Behaviour which may constitute a true Repentance; such as, *May be unto Salvation, not to be repented of*, preparing us for the divine Forgiveness and Favour.

In the next Place, Charity, that most amiable Virtue, is hereby much exercised and improved. Asking of God Pardon for our Sins, as we profess from our Hearts to forgive those that trespass against us, implies

implies a Consciousness of this Duty, as of indispensable Obligation, more especially in the Act of Intercession for others; and when joining with others in public Prayer, how naturally does it tend to expand the Mind, fill it with the most generous Sentiments of universal Good-will, with the Principles of an extensive and diffusive Benevolence; to unite us to those who join with us in the Bonds of the most tender Affection, as Children of the same universal Parent, united by the inviolable Bond of Christianity; being in the same State of Probation, exercised with the same or like Temptations and Difficulties, and having one and the same End or Happiness in View, whereunto we are Fellow-travellers and Heirs. Joining with others in Prayer, engages us to look on them as ourselves; to consider their Interest as our own, and to exercise that Charity which consists in wishing well to, and as far as in us lies, promoting the Welfare and Happiness of others. — Now, next to the Love of God, what Affection can more exalt and adorn our Natures than Charity, which is the nearest Resemblance of God, and the truest Source of solid Pleasure?

Furthermore, the habitual Exercise of this Duty, enlarges the Mind to great and noble Conceptions of Things; it hereby acquires a Grandeur of Thought, an Elevation above present Things. Prayer is indeed an Abstraction of Mind from sensible Objects, wherein the Soul aspires, and devoutly addresses itself to the supreme Being, and by constant Application to him, as the Author of its Existence, it learns to regard him as the Object of its Happiness: And when thus frequently employed in spiritual Exercises, the Mind rises to a heavenly Temper; and as its Relish becomes spiritual, nothing sensual can satiate or satisfy it. Hence the Subserviency of Prayer to Religion in general is most apparent; the Desire and Delight of the Soul center in God and divine Things, and the delusive Amusements, otherwise strong Temptations, arising from worldly Things, lose their Power over it.

Again;

Again ; in other Respects, Prayer has a moral Tendency to promote Religion, by exciting to the diligent Use of all the necessary and suitable Means of Improvement ; when we implore the divine Assistance for resisting Temptation, surmounting any Difficulties that may obstruct our Progress in Religion, or intreat the Almighty to assist us more to understand, and rightly discharge our several and respective Duties ; it bespeaks and demands from us all that Care and Diligence, Watchfulness and Circumspection which we are capable of, to use the rational Faculties we enjoy, and the Means afforded us already in our Power, in such manner, as may best comport with the End and Design of them, and conduce to our obtaining that Knowledge and Virtue, which we profess to desire we may be assisted to obtain ; and consequently, that we be very careful not to resist, but thankfully embrace, and endeavour to co-operate with the gracious Impulses of the divine Spirit, to endeavour after greater Evidence and Experience thereof ; an Evidence at least of its Effects, if not of its Operation : Nor are we to consider of this as only, or chiefly, instantaneous and immediate : No, 'tis of a prevailing, conducting Tendency, and the After-remembrance and Reflection on the Nature and Intention of Prayer, *viz.* that we might be bettered by it, our own Acknowledgments, Professions and Resolutions occurring to our Minds, which were all founded on Reason, made in the more immediate Presence of, and to God our Creator and Judge, must, methinks, gain an Influence on our Conduct, and prove a Check to the Gratification of our irregular Passions : An Argument against the Difficulties, and a Guard against the Temptations, in Life, tend to increase our Zeal and Warmth in Religion, and gradually cultivate in our Minds every virtuous and good Disposition, pleasing to that holy Being we address, and so naturally conducive to render us the Objects of his Favour.

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There is yet another Sense, in which Prayer may be considered as conducive hereunto; *viz.* the Prevalency of Prayer, but that will more properly follow in another place.

Furthermore, when the Soul is thus, by an Habit of Devotion, formed in some Measure to a Resemblance of God, and thence is led to call God its Father, in the most emphatical Sense, it learns to trust in God, as an all-sufficient Good, in whom it can place its Confidence, and fully determines to acquiesce in all the Methods of his Providence. "When the Christian prays to God, his Contemplation on the divine Attributes, and the making his Requests known to him by humble Supplication, tend to ease his Mind of many anxious Thoughts; his Trust in God inspires him with Courage and Resolution in Times of Difficulty and Danger; and his Resignation to the divine Will in all Events, makes him more contented and chearful.

Lastly, Prayer has a Tendency to raise and establish our Hopes in the divine Favour, and all the consequent Blessings of it. By some Degrees of it, indeed, we are encouraged to pray; but in the Exercise of it, we often feel a joyful Expectation of the Things prayed for, tho' sometimes it may be somewhat faint and languid, mingled with Fear, that may for a short Interval deprive the Mind of Comfort. Perseverance herein tends to strengthen our Hopes, so as to stay our Minds, and preserve them calm and serene, believing that our Prayers will be accepted and answered, so far as infinite Wisdom shall see fit in this World; and that, continuing in a Course of Virtue, hereafter we shall be rendered perfectly happy and glorious in the Presence of God, without Measure and without End.

S E C T. V.

P R A Y E R may farther be considered as a necessary, indispensable Part of Religion; and as a Proof of our Sincerity in other Parts, Prayer supposes

supposes that the Soul is really affected with a Sense of God and Religion; that it has an inward Reverence of the supreme Majesty of Heaven and Earth; and when a Person is inspired with the most sublime and extensive Ideas of the divine Being, his Duties and Obligations to him, he will experience such an Elevation of Soul above all present Enjoyments, that must produce an ardent Desire to feel more of the Power and the Pleasure of Religion; and he will not readily omit a Duty, in which the Essence of Religion, and the Progress and Happiness of a religious Life, consist. A due Attention to his own State and Circumstances will beget pious Ejaculations to God; a firm Belief that our Lives, and the Comforts of them, are in his Hands, will excite us to refer ourselves to his Care, and to implore his Blessing. Prayer is sometimes called the first Effort of a religious Soul to God, always natural, constantly becoming, and, by almost every interesting Occurrence, rendered expedient or necessary: And therefore, it is the unwearied Duty and Exercise of a good Man to pour out his Sorrows, his Wants, his Hopes and Fears, to the great Author of his Being; and on every Opportunity to glorify the Author of his Mercies, which are renewed to him every Moment.—But those who are so far immersed in the Cares, or Honours, or Pleasures of Life, as to live in the Neglect of this Duty, inherit nothing of this divine Temper; know or feel very little of the genuine vital Principle of Religion, and less, if possible, of the Pleasures of the Christian Life *.

S E C T. VI.

PRAYER, as it is the most solemn of all Acts, so is it an Exercise in itself the most noble and excellent. To enter, as it were, into the more immediate Presence of God;—to hold Correspondence with Heaven;—to converse with the supreme Lord and

* Rev. Mr. *Groves*.

and Governor of the World ;—to have Communion and Fellowship with him ;—is the highest Dignity our Natures are capable of. Praise, which is Part of this divine Exercise, is represented as the constant and never-ending Employment of Angels in their exalted Sphere, and of those pure Beings who surround the Throne of God, worshipping and ascribing *Blessing, and Glory, and Wisdom, and Thanksgiving, and Honour, and Power, unto God for ever* ; and in proclaiming with a loud Voice, *Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive Power, and Riches, and Wisdom, and Strength, and Honour, and Glory, and Blessing*, Rev. vii. 12. v. 12. And since it is the distinguishing Excellency of our Nature, and one of the great Ends for which we were thus created ; and since we are taught, that by such Exercises here, we shall in some Measure be prepared to join that heavenly angelic Host, let us anticipate the Honour in as high a Degree as we are capable of, till we shall be translated to those Regions of Bliss, and join that heavenly Assembly, and there praise God with more sublime and elevated strains of Devotion, than our present imperfect State will admit of.

S E C T. VII.

THE Pleasure enjoyed in the Exercise of this Duty is another Motive to it. How much so ever this may be thought to favour of Enthusiasm, the Experience and Consciousness of many Christians will, I doubt not, confirm the Assertion, that Pleasures of this kind are the most rational, delightful, (or rapturous) and lasting. In this Duty, we pray for, hope for, and often feel the pleasing Emanations of the divine Favour ; feel somewhat of the enlivening, comforting Influences of the holy Spirit ; feel the Mind, as it were, put in Tune, and the Tongue, inditing as the Pen of a ready Writer, find the most pleasing Employment of devout Affection, the noblest Exercise
of

of the Passions, and the Communications of God's Favours, in Aid to our Frailty, in dissipating our Fears, or strengthening our Hopes of divine Acceptance; leading us to rejoice in the Light of his Countenance, and feeling in his loving Kindness the Completion of all our Desires. As these have been the Attainments of many Christians, so it would be more generally experienced were Mens Application more frequent in this Duty. As this Pleasure is not of a worldly Nature, it is no wonder if the carnal Mind is a Stranger to it; and that those who immerse themselves in Sensuality, cannot intermeddle with its Joy; but the Man who lives under an habitual Sense of the divine Presence, keeps up a perpetual Chearfulness of Mind, through an Intercourse and Communion with the great Author of his Being; his Heart burns with Devotion, swells with Hope, and is supported in the Consciousness of that Presence which every where surrounds him; and the more he practises these devout Exercises, the more his Pleasure will increase, not flighty, passionate, and inconstant, but a rational, manly calm, and Satisfaction of Mind; and therefore it has been wisely, as well as piously observed, that a State of Temperance, Sobriety, and Justice, without Devotion, is a cold, lifeless Condition of Virtue. Devotion opens the Mind to great Conceptions, fills it with more sublime Ideas, and affords more transporting Pleasures than are to be met with in the most exalted Sciences. To use the Words of an ingenious Author, "Can there be a more sublime Pleasure than to dwell in the Contemplation of the Beauties of the eternal Mind, the amiable Author of all that is beautiful, grand, and harmonious, the beneficent Giver of all that is convenient, comfortable, and useful? Can there be a more advantageous Employ, than to present our Requests to the Father of Mercies, opening our Mind to the Radiance of his Wisdom, and all the Faculties of our Souls to the Communications of his Grace *?"

S E C T.

* Rev. Mr. *Hervey's* Meditations.

S E C T. VIII.

NOtwithstanding the Advantages are so many, the Pleasure so sublime, and the Motives so great, it is also an *easy Task*; it is natural, therefore cannot be difficult. The Reason of Man must naturally prompt him to it, as well as in a great Measure instruct him in it: By an Attention to our own State and Circumstances, to what we are as Creatures, dependent and accountable; and from the Experience of our own Frailty, Weakness, Imperfection, and Guilt; and a due Reflection on the Blessings we enjoy, the Parts of Prayer will naturally present themselves, and the Language adapted thereto will to many occur without great Difficulty. But if this is not easy to all (and many Persons find some Difficulty) it may afford no small Consolation to such, when they call to their Remembrance that *God looketh at the Heart*; and as he requireth no more, so a Man becomes accepted according to what he hath, and not according to what he hath not; and besides the external Advantages enjoyed, which are abundantly useful to this End, wherein we experience our own Insufficiency, and desire the divine Aid (which we shall further consider) we may depend on all necessary Assistance, such as will not only render the frequent Use of it practicable, but easy and pleasant.

It is not only an easy Task, and no Ways burthensome or expensive, like the Ceremonies or Sacrifices under the *Mosaic Law*: But it is spiritual and rational, evidently intended for the Employment of our reasoning Powers to the best Advantage, more than as a Task and Trial of our Virtue; and therefore we must be inexcusable to live in the Neglect of it.

S E C T. IX.

IT deserves to be considered, that it is highly reasonable, a Part of our Time should be devoted

to this Service, as to him who is the Author of our Beings and Mercies, and the Centre of our Happiness, our Times are in his Hands, and his are all our Ways. To him therefore should be acknowledged our Subjection, Dependence and Obligations. Do Men spare much Time for a long Course together; and are they at much Expence to acquire Knowledge in particular Professions, to understand Trade and Merchandize, to obtain the delusive Wealth, Honours or Pleasures of Life? And shall we think a little Pains too much to learn a heavenly Converse, to acquaint ourselves with God, that thereby the highest and most durable Good may come to us? Is not all our Time his? And shall we not sequester a small Part of it to spend in his Worship, whose Service is perfect Freedom, and is its own Reward? It was a wise and pious Saying of Dr. *Donne*, "That the only Time he saved, or employed to the best Purpose, he spent in Piety, in Prayer, and in doing Good."

C H A P. II.

The Efficacy or Prevalence of Prayer considered.

S E C T. I.

WE come now to consider another, and what the Scripture represents as a very considerable Motive to Prayer, viz. The obtaining the Blessings we need. That it is the Way God hath appointed for that End, agreeable to that of St. *Paul*, *Heb. iv. 16. Let us come boldly to the Throne of Grace, that we may obtain Mercy, and find Grace to help in Time of Need.* And the Language of God, by the Prophet *Ezekiel*, ch. xxxvi. 26.—38. dictates the same Thing: *I will make you a new Heart, and a new Spirit will I give unto you: I will cause you to walk in my Statutes, and ye shall keep my Judgments, to do them, I will save you from all your Uncleannesses, and ye shall be my People, and I will be your God.—I will multiply the Fruit of the Tree,*
and

and the Increase of the Field.—Yet for all these Things will I be enquired of by the House of Israel, to do it for them, saith the Lord. And Jer. xxxiii. 3, 4. Call upon me, and I will answer thee; and will shew thee great and mighty Things, which thou knowest not. Thus saith the Lord, the God of Israel. And Isaiah xiv. 11. Thus saith the holy one of Israel, their Maker, ask me of Things to come, and concerning the Work of my Hands command ye me.

The Scripture records numerous Examples of the ancient Patriarchs and good Men, praying to God in this Belief and Expectation, intermixed with a Variety of Promises, on which their Duty and their Expectations were founded: The Truth of which is abundantly confirmed from their professed Experience, and almost unquestionable Evidence of Facts. And it is enjoined on Mankind, as their indispensable Duty and Interest, both on ordinary and extraordinary Occasions, not only under that Dispensation, wherein God at sundry Times, and in divers Manners, spake unto our Fathers by the Mouth of his holy Prophets; but when the Meridian of Light appeared in the Son of God himself, Prayer is taught us by his Example and Command; and encouraged and enforced by this Promise, *that if we ask, we shall receive.* Nay, as if it was the Design of our Lord, to guard against any Misapprehension, and thereby weaken or lessen a very considerable Motive to Prayer, he condescends to represent it by very apt and significant Similies, and enforces it from the Relation of God to his Creatures, his original Perfection and inherent Goodness. *Matt. vii. 6.--9. Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened; for what Man is there of you, if his Son ask Bread, will he give him a Stone? Or if he ask a Fish, will he give him a Serpent? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good Gifts unto your Children, how much more shall your Father which is in Heaven, give good Gifts to them that ask him?*

St. Luke relates this Discourse of our Saviour's, and includes in the Sequel of it the full Scope of the Ar-

gument with this small Variation: *How much more shall your heavenly Father give his holy Spirit to them that ask him*, Luke xi. 10, 11. As if this Evangelist considered or understood our Saviour's Words in that determinate Sense; we may, however, from thence conclude, that our Lord's Intention was to persuade his Disciples and Followers to pray fervently for such Things as were necessary to their present Improvement and future Happiness, assuring them, that such needful Things should not be denied them, if they asked for them; founding his Arguments on the Goodness of the Deity: *How much more shall your heavenly Father give his holy Spirit to them that ask him?* And St. James i. 6, 7. tells us, *We have not, because we ask not, or ask amiss*; and adds, *If any Man lack Wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all Men Liberally, and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him.* And James v. 17. *The effectual fervent Prayer of a righteous Man availeth much.*

But notwithstanding the Prevalency of Prayer does thus appear a Truth supported by Scripture, yet many Persons of distinguished Abilities conceive differently of it; I shall therefore enter on a more particular Discussion of this Point. And first I think it proper to premise and distinguish between the Terms *accepting* and *answering* Prayer; and this I shall do in the Words of a late Author. "By *accepting* them, says he, I would be understood to mean God's Approbation of them; and by *answering*, God's giving the Petitioner such Things as he asks for; I make a Distinction between these Two; because there are some Petitions which God *accepts* and *approves*, tho' he does not see fit to grant the Thing prayed for; and in like manner the Qualifications to render Prayer *accepted* and *answered* are of a distinct Nature, and capable of distinct Consideration. 'This being observ'd, when Men put up such Petitions to God as are good and lawful in themselves; when they do it seriously, and with such Earnestness as is suitable to the Nature of the Duty, and Importance of the Thing prayed for;

and

and as Christians, in the Name of Christ, and with a modest Resignation to the Will of God ; in all those Cases we are uncertain, that the Thing prayed for is fit for us to ask, or God to bestow ; when we so pray, as that God's End in appointing this Duty is answered upon us, I think there is no room to doubt, but God will approve of and accept our Prayer. As to the answer, of Prayer : As God appointed the Exercise of this Duty, not for his own Sake, but for the Good and Benefit of the Petitioner ; and as God is infinite in Wisdom, and consequently must know what is best, most for the Good and Benefit of the Creature at all Times ; so when our Petitions have the proper Qualifications to render them accepted, and God sees the giving them to us will be more for our real Good than the withholding them from us, such Petitions God will answer in the most proper Time, and the most proper Measure, his infinite Wisdom shall direct, provided our After-conduct does not render us unworthy of them."

Having thus premised and distinguished between the Terms *accepting* and *answering* Prayer, I shall, in the further Prosecution of my Subject, attempt to comprise the principal Force of our Objector's Reasonings against the Prevalency of Prayer, in the following Particulars, and then oppose in Answer thereto some Arguments in Favour of it ; and this I shall attempt with Impartiality and Freedom. And first, in Opposition to the Idea of the Prevalency of Prayer with the supreme Being, our Objectors argue,

I. That God is perfectly acquainted with our Wants, so that we cannot inform him of any Thing of which he is ignorant ; and though there are Evils we might wish to be removed, or some Good we earnestly desire to have continued or conferred upon us, God, who is infinite in Wisdom, must see whether the Removal of those Evils we deprecate, or the conferring of those good Things we implore, will be for our real Good ; and consequently,

II. That the Goodness of God is like himself, infinite, eternal, and immutable; which plainly implies, that he will ever act agreeably to that most amiable Character. And since communicating Happiness to his Creatures must be his End in their Creation, it follows, that, of his own inherent Goodness, he will have Regard to and render Mankind happy, so far as is consistent with his infinite Wisdom, without being influenced by the Sollicitations of finite Beings.

III. That God is an unchangeable Being, *The Father of Lights, with whom is no Variableness, nor Shadow of Turning*; unchangeable in his Nature and Purposes; a Being, not subject to Passion; but all his Measures are constantly regulated by unerring Wisdom. How then can the Importunity of finite Creatures move his Compassion, or incline and prevail on the Deity to alter his Purposes, recede from, or act otherwise than agreeable to the original established Laws of Nature? Or influence him to make any Alteration in the State and Circumstance of any Individual, for and in Consideration of their Intreaties.

IV. That the supreme God and Father of all, the universal Parent of Nature, acts not by partial, but by general Laws; wisely calculated to promote Good according to the whole universal Scheme of Government, or as may best subserve the Ends of his all-wise universal Providence; and that the Idea of a particular Providence, on which the Prevalence of Prayer is founded, is rather supposed than proved.

V. That the Perfection of the supreme Governor, as the universal Lord and absolute Proprietor of all Things, who has founded his Government in Wisdom, and supports it with Lenity and Mercy, necessarily supposes that he dispenses his Favours throughout the Universe, not in an arbitrary capricious Manner, but with perfect Rectitude and Impartiality; and that to suppose finite Beings can at all influence him by Prayer, so as to obtain and engross peculiar

peculiar Favours to themselves, is a Supposition highly derogatory to his moral Character; carries with it an Imputation of Imperfection in the Deity, as tho' he wanted Wisdom or Goodness to reward his Creatures, or to confer on them such Favours as were consistent with their State and Circumstances in the World, or the more general Good of Mankind.

To these, and many other particular Objections, as they are expressed in the Works of some celebrated modern Writers, I shall pay a due Regard in the subsequent Answers. By Dr. *Foster* *, Prayer is thus represented, and its Prevalency exploded. "As the true End of Prayer cannot be to inform God, so in a strict and proper Sense, it cannot be to move his Compassion, because his Kindness and Mercy towards his Creatures is ever strong and unchangeable. And it ought not to be imagined, since he knows every Circumstance of their Distress before-hand, that the most lively and pathetic Representations of their Wants, can influence him to do any Thing to which he is not inclined by his essential Goodness. Compassion, as it is a Principle in human Nature, has Imperfection and Weakness attending it; which must by no Means be attributed to the infinite and all-perfect Being, &c.

And as our Prayers cannot be imagined to excite any new Sentiments of Goodness, any Instinct of Compassion, it is also impossible they should induce him to alter any of his general Purposes, or to recede from that wise Scheme which he originally fixed for the Government of the World; we therefore entertain very low and contemptible Conceptions of him, if we understand Importunity in Prayer to be a wearying him out with our continual Addresses; a kind of teasing him to a Compliance; or indeed, if we imagine it has any other Weight with him, than as it renders us the fit Objects of his Mercy."

The Author adds, p. 317. "We are not to conceive of our Maker, as if he was backward to do

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* Dr. *Foster's* Sermons, Vol. IV. P. 316.

us good, and therefore wanted to be courted and solicited to it; or, as a vain Being, that delights to be complimented, and to hear his own Excellencies proclaimed, and takes Pleasure in the Submission and humble Acknowledgments of his Creatures, merely as the Pomp and splendid Ostentation of his supreme Power and Dominion; because these Things are adapted only to please weak Minds, having nothing in them of true and solid Excellence, and of Consequence, can never be approved by the infinite Wisdom of God."

To the same Purpose Dr. *Leechman*, in his Treatise of Prayer, says, "That, as it is not the Design of Prayer to inform God of our Wants; so neither is it the Design of it to move his Affections; God is not changed or wrought upon by our Prayers, *With him there is no Variableness, nor Shadow of Turning*. Prayer only works its Effects upon us, as it contributes to change the Temper of our Minds, to beget, or improve right Dispositions in them; to lay them open to the Impression of spiritual Objects, and thus qualifies us for receiving the Favour and Approbation of our Maker*.

Another Gentleman says: "Prayer is instituted by God, and calculated in itself, for the immediate Benefit and Advantage of them that pray—for as it cannot make the great God more happy, so neither can it render him more wise, merciful, or good, or better disposed to communicate any Degree of Happiness to his Creatures, than he already is, and will for ever continue to be, without the least Variation or Possibility of Change. So that all the Change, Improvement, or Advantage which we can reasonably expect, as the immediate Effect of our Prayers, must be in ourselves—Nor is this any Argument against offering our Petitions to God, in behalf of all Mankind: For besides that he hath commanded us so to do, it has a plain Tendency to improve our benevolent Affections, and,

* Rev. Dr. *Leechman* on Prayer, page 17. See Preface, page 2.

and, by Consequence, to increase our Usefulness to those for whom we pray.

An infinitely good and merciful God does not need to be importuned and intreated to show Favour and Mercy to any of his Creatures—But we do greatly need to be frequently put in mind of what is due from us to our Fellow-creatures, and what we ought sincerely to desire and wish for, in their behalf—This then is what God has provided for, by pointing out to us stated and returning Seasons of Prayer, in which we may renew our solemn Vows, and repeat our Petitions in behalf of all Men, as our Lord has directed; by which we shall gradually habituate ourselves to the most humane and friendly Wishes, the most generous and benevolent Disposition towards all Mankind; and, with respect to the Desire expressed in the Petition now under Consideration, shall readily and chearfully do what in us lies to render it effectual; and by every other Method in our Power, shall endeavour to make the Will or Law of God more generally and universally obeyed.” *

It were easy to quote other Authors who have wrote in favour of these Ideas; but as some of them have expressed themselves in an unguarded, and I think indecent Manner, I shall not chuse to perpetuate the Memory of it by Repetition. *Job* long ago spoke the Sentiments of some, who vainly ask, what Profit shall we have, if we pray to the Almighty?

Having thus impartially represented the principal Objections to the Prevalency of Prayer; some of which are urged against the Doctrine of a particular Providence, and supernatural Assistance, I shall endeavour to shew their Inconclusiveness, and demonstrate its Efficacy.

It has been observed, that Prayer, which implies in it Petition, is a Duty founded in Nature; that there is a kind of Instinct, a natural Propensity in the Mind of Man, to fly to some superior Being for Succour and Relief

* *Mr. West's Treatise of Prayer, P. 114*

lief in a Time of Danger and Distress; an inward Principle that leads the Mind to hope for Relief, and inspires it with Gratitude to that invisible, superintendent Being, from whom Men believe they have received any extraordinary Good. Prayer, in this Idea of it, appears, not only to have been the Practice of the Wise and Virtuous in all Ages, and Nations, but has been in Times of Extremity the Resource of those, who, at other Times, were for excluding the Belief of a God, and his Providence from their Minds. Witness *Hobbs* and *Spinoza* *. This implies it is natural, and implanted by the universal Parent; and if so, I may infer, that the all-wise and good God would never have implanted such an Instinct or Tendency in the Mind to answer no End at all, much less to be the Source of groundless Anxiety: But that it is consistent with Man's derived and dependent State, to *ask*, and with infinite Perfection to *regard* and *answer* the Prayers of his Creatures, properly qualified, so far as may be consistent with his Glory and their Good.

I shall here also take it for granted, without attempting the Proof of it, that the Scriptures are of divine Original, and the Rule of Faith and Practice. I shall therefore shew, that the Scripture asserts and illustrates this Truth, by the most apt and significant Similitudes, and is every where consistent; and consequently should direct us in reasoning on this Subject. To return, therefore, to the Consideration of the Objections, *viz.*

First, The perfect Knowledge and infinite Wisdom of God are urged as the principal Objection.

To this I Answer, That to inform God of our Wants, or, as it is sometimes expressed, to increase his Knowledge, is not the Design of Prayer. But as the Knowledge of God extends to all Truth, it consequently does so to the State and Circumstances of all his Creatures, and includes the Knowledge of what is best for them, and whereby to confer Happiness in all possible

possible Cases. This renders God the proper Object of Prayer.—Besides, the Knowledge of God implies his constant Inspection of Mankind, *That his Eyes are upon the Hearts and Actions of Men*, Job. xxxiv. 21. Jer. xi. 20. 1 Chron. xxviii. 9. *His Ear hears all their Words*; Psal. cxxxix. Ez. xi. 5. Amos iv. 13. Marks the Sincerity, Ardency, and devout Affection of the Soul, arising from the lively Exercise of Faith, Hope and Trust; and consequently, tho' our Prayers cannot inform him, it is a Principle as assential to Wisdom, as to Holiness and Goodness, to approve and regard such Dispositions and Affections of Soul, as are consistent with the State of Mankind, and comport with his moral Government; more especially these religious Acts of Prayer and Praise. “Among Men, there is a certain Disposition and Temper of Mind, which a wise Giver expects in such as he favours; and that without Regard thereto, Bounty and Beneficence would be Weakness and Imprudence. Will a wise Man be as kind to the Careless, the Perverse, and the Ungrateful, as to the Suppliant, the Humble, the Modest, and the Grateful? Till the eternal, unalterable Relations of Things cease, God cannot be supposed to love the Impious and Disobedient, equally with the Virtuous, the Penitent, and the Suppliant”.* For this Reason, Prayer, in the Constitution of God's Government, is represented acceptable, and well-pleasing; and as a Reason, Cause, or Condition on our Part, for the obtaining the Things we need. *Whosoever calleth on the Name of the Lord shall be saved*, Joel ii. 32.

Should Prayer be represented merely as a positive Appointment and Condition on our Part, on which God would bestow his Favour, it would be an Impeachment of his Wisdom to appoint that as a Condition, which, consistent with his Perfections in general, he could not pay Regard to; but with respect to this Duty, there is Wisdom, as well as Goodness, in appointing Prayer; as the Condition of our obtaining such Fa-

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* Dr. Benson.

your and Blessings from him, which, in the Nature of Things, have a Tendency to prepare us in some Measure for the Reception of Blessings, and dispose us in a right Manner to improve them.

Secondly, The Goodness of God, which is essential and universal, is also said to be invariably the same; he does not need to be solicited to bestow his Favours, neither is he capable of being influenced by our Petitions.

To this I Answer, It is his Goodness which renders him accessible by Prayers; and for this Purpose it was appointed, that they should be offered thro' the Mediator—And can his Goodness be urged as an Objection to Prayer with any Propriety, when the Relation and Character of an universal and indulgent Father is his most amiable, attractive, endearing Appellation; as not only the Former of our Bodies, but the Father of our Spirits, to whom we are directed to pray, and from whom we are to hope for Mercy, *As our Father, who is in Heaven?* And if from our Relation to him as Creatures, we may invoke him as the Father of Mercy, and God of all *Compassion*; this we may do with greater Confidence, Hope and Joy, when we can view our nearer Relation to him, and rejoice in the Privileges of Adoption (which will be farther considered).

Compassion, indeed, is represented as a Principle in human Nature, that has Weakness and Imperfection attending it, and therefore must be by no Means attributed to the divine all-perfect Being—That the Idea of Compassion in God, may be abstracted from any Ideas that carry an Imputation of Imperfection, may be fairly gathered from the different Senses of the Word; since it signifies Mercy, Kindness, and Propitioufness; and is likewise applied to Cases suited and adapted to this Idea. Thus, *Psal. ciii. 13. The Lord hath Compassion on them that fear him; on them that hope in his Mercy. Psal. lxxxvi 15. The Lord is gracious and full of Compassion, Psal. cxi. 4. And St. Paul styles him,*
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The God of all Compassion : Who displays the Care, *the Compassion*, the Goodness and Tenderness of a Father, in all his Dispensations : All which imply, that Compassion, in a proper and determinate Sense, is applicable to God, tho' not in the same Sense as it is to Men, *viz.* as a sympathetic and painful Commiseration ; and in like Manner, God is said to be *angry with the Wicked* ; implying the perfect Opposition of his Nature to them.—In Man, it implies an uneasy and inordinate Passion—Again, Repentance in God signifies his revoking a Sentence of Judgment against a Nation, in regard of their Amendment ; but when spoken of Man, it constantly supposes Sorrow, Pain, Fear, &c. Yet these Expressions of Anger, and of Repentance, are spoken concerning God ; and we form our Ideas thereof from his Nature, and from the Sequel and Connection of the Context ; and by the same Rule may we understand Compassion in the Deity, whereby his derived, dependent Creatures have Encouragement to spread forth their Wants and Sorrows, to refer themselves to his Care, to hope in his Mercy, and Joy in him as the God of all Salvation. “ If we may safely take our Sentiments of Prayer from *Jesus*, the Son of God, we shall find several strong Intimations, that Pity or Compassion may be excited in the Deity by earnest Prayer. The Parable of the unjust Judge, *Luke xviii. 1.* appears to teach a Doctrine somewhat like this ; and is plainly adapted to inspire Men with this Sentiment. So likewise the natural Tenderness and Compassion excited in a Father by the Petitions of his Son, is mentioned by our Lord as but faint Representations of the divine Compassion. *Matt. vii. 7—12.* His own Agony, his Prayers and Supplications, with strong Crying and Tears, imply, that he was possessed of this Persuasion ; that his Father would be influenced by such an Address, and the Success of it ; that is to say, his being heard, in that he feared, is a Proof of the Thing supposed. *Luke xxii. 43, 44.* compared with *Heb. v. 7.* This will be farther considered in another Section.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, The Unchangeableness of the divine Nature is offered as an Objection to the Prevalency of Prayer.

To this I Answer, If his unchangeable Holiness and Purity of Nature, imply his constant Approbation of Virtue, Purity of Heart and Life, which is essential to the Character of the Deity, according to the Language of the Scripture, and Confessions of the wisest Heathens; it must follow, that Persons are more or less the Objects of divine Favour, as they are more or less found in their Duty, and in the Practice of Religion: And this must unavoidably extend to every Individual, as his Actions may at any different Periods of his Life, render him more or less the meet Object of divine Favour, or otherwise; and consequently, when a Sinner repents, and amends, he ceases to be the proper Object of the divine Displeasure, and becomes the meet Object of Mercy and Favour; and thereupon it is consistent with infinite Wisdom and Goodness to remit the intended Punishment, or to confer any extraordinary Mercy and Favour. This is so far from being the Effect of Change and Alteration in the Deity, that it may more justly be said to result from his unchangeable Love and Approbation of Virtue, and his Displeasure against Sin—I may add, when a sincere or humble Supplicant implores the Removal of Evil, or the Conferring some particular Good, God may properly be said to grant his Desire, without any Imputation of Change. “There is then, (says another ingenious Author) no Change in God, but in the Supplicant; altho’ at the same Time his blessing me with Food, his Forgiveness of my Sins, his delivering me from Evil, be considered as the Instances of his *special Care and Love*; yet I should not have been a suitable and proper Object of this Favour, had not I by my Prayers to the supreme Being performed the Condition, and been wrought up to a suitable Frame and Temper of Mind for such Instances of special Favour; so that it can with no Propriety be said, that, antecedent to my Acts of Piety and Devotion,

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by which this Temper was wrought in me, it was proper for God to give me the Instances of his special Care and Love; to forgive me my Sins, without my thus becoming a Supplicant; or to deliver me from Evil, without thus imploring his Aid; but on the contrary, when, by my Addresses to him, I am more and more transformed into his Likeness, in the Temper and Disposition of my Soul, and my Life and Conversation are accordingly regulated; I can then come with Boldness to his Throne; I can approach him as a Father; I can view his Perfections, as my Security and Refuge, under whatever Calamity; I can firmly rely on those his Promises, on which he hath caused me to hope." *

But as these Sentiments will not be admitted by many, and the contrary are endeavoured to be supported by Objections to the particular Providence of God, these will properly enough claim a more minute Consideration in the subsequent Remarks, *viz.*

Fourthly, That the supreme God and Father of all Acts, not by partial, but by general Laws, wisely calculated to promote Good throughout the whole universal System; and that the Idea of a particular Providence, upon which the Prevalence of Prayer is founded, is rather supposed than proved.

To which I answer, That the Government of God consists in his Superintendance over both the natural and moral World. The Government of the universal System is according to stated Laws, which God in his infinite Wisdom adapted and constituted to this End, and to which he has ever since caused it to be passively subject; but then they are not independent of himself, but supported by the divine Energy, or immediate Acts of his Power.

It is also a rational Conclusion, that his Government of the Natural, must be consistent with, and conducive to his Government of the Moral World; and that natural Causes will be made at all Times to execute his Pleasure, in the Correction and Punishment,

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or in the Safety and Happiness of Nations, Families, or particular Persons; as for Instance, Fire, Water, Wind and Meteors.

With respect to the Winds, no Philosopher has been able to arrive at any Certainty in his Enquiries concerning their Origin, and the Laws by which they are governed; so that it may be said of the Winds, with respect to our Knowledge of their Cause, that, *It bloweth where it listeth*. But *Job* speaks of it, as turned about by his Councils, Ch. xxxvii. 12. *Whose Directions both the Winds and the Seas obey*, Luke viii. 27. And from the various shifting of the Winds, (as for Instance) to favour the Landing of the Prince of Orange, we have Reason to suppose, that important Event was under the immediate Direction of Providence.

I am of Opinion with Dr. *Samuel Clarke*, who says, "Nothing can be more reasonable than to say, That God, upon whose good Pleasure all the Laws and Powers of Nature perpetually depend, does, at least, in some great Events, determine the Influences of natural Causes, to produce such or such particular Effects. Thus much we see God has put even in the Power of *Men*; by skilful and artificial Application, they can, in many Instances, determine the natural Powers of Things to produce such Effects, as they would not naturally have produced without such Guidance and Direction of Art: And nothing can be more absurd, than to imagine that God does less in the Government of the World than even some of his Creatures are able to do. When, therefore, we see *natural Causes* conspire strangely, and by a long Series, to produce some remarkable Event, we have all the Reason in the World to believe, that Thing to be brought about by the peculiar Direction of Providence." *

'Tis recorded of *Apuleius*, a *Platonic* Philosopher, that he said, "What a Pilot is in a Ship, or, what he is that holds the Reins and drives the Chariot, or he that beats Time and leads a Concert, or what the Law is

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* Sermons, vol. vi. page 377.

to a City, or the General in an Army ; this is what God is in, or to the World."

An universal Sense and Apprehension of God's particular Providence, or his constant immediate Concern with human Affairs, has been evident even among the idolatrous and pagan Nations, witness their *Lares*, or household Gods, their Gods of the Highways, Seas, Woods, &c. whom their Philosophers conceived of as Guardians and Protectors, under the Direction of a supreme Deity.

"No Supposition is in general so honourable to the perfect Wisdom and Rectitude of the Deity, as this ; that upon all Occasions, which require it, he guides and conducts the Course of Nature, in such a manner, as to make it subservient to the most beneficial Purposes."

In Confirmation of this, it may be questioned whether any such Laws could be originally fixed in the Universe, as without an immediate Direction and Interposition of the Deity, upon some special Occasions, could possibly answer all the Ends of Government, with respect to Mankind in this Life, considered both as moral, and accountable Creatures, in a State of Trial, and as united together in Societies ; for how a certain and necessary Course of Things can be completely and minutely adapted to the infinitely various and uncertain Passions, Designs, and Pursuits of free Agents, is extremely hard to be conceived. Must there then be no Providence, no supreme Regulation with regard to such Events as these?—The Belief of a Providence supposes, that it extends to the various Exigencies, States and Circumstances of reasonable and moral Agents.

Again, if we suppose an original Settlement of Things, which has provided for all Events, it introduces a sort of Fatality into the Doctrine of Providence. For altho' God is supposed to be at the Head of this original Settlement, yet it makes his Government confined, and seems to enervate every Argument of Hope

and Trust: Nay, it describes every of his immediate Acts of Power and divine Energy as necessitated, and, of Consequence, introduces an Idea of the Father of the Universe as the God of *Fate*, or *Necessity*, but not of *Providence*; those established Laws of Creation and Providence being of equal Date, and both confined to the original Constitution—On the contrary, the constant immediate Acts of Power and divine Energy, are not only necessary to the Well-being and Government of the moral World; but from innumerable Instances of special Aid, appearing necessary, from the Make of Man, and the Circumstances of his present Frailty; it is, I apprehend, highly congruous to the known Character of the Deity, that he should frequently interpose; and if we will allow of the various Revelations God hath made of himself to Man, thro' the several Ages of the World, we shall see Reason to acknowledge God has constantly exercised what we call a particular Providence. Of this *Pharoah* is a remarkable Instance: When the Enemy pursued *Israel*, saying, *I will divide the Spoil; my Lust shall be satisfied; I will draw my Sword, and my Hand shall destroy them. God blew with his Wind; the Sea covered them, and they sunk, as Lead, in the mighty Waters*, *Exod. xv. 9, 10.* To this might be added the History of *Joseph*, and the Inference which *Joseph* made from it to his Brethren. *Ye intended it for Evil, but God meant it Good*, *Gen. i. 19, 20.*—*Senacherib* comes against *Jerusalem*, and by *Rabshakeh* proclaims his proud Design; but God wonderfully disappoints him, *Isaiah xxxvi* and *xxxvii.* All that the envious Presidents could devise or execute against *Daniel*, could not hurt him; but he prospered in the Reign of *Darius*, and of *Cyrus*. And when the Enemies of the Apostles had taken Counsel to slay them, *Gamaliel* becomes the Instrument in the Hand of God for their Deliverance, *Acts v. 33, 34, &c.* And even when many had bound themselves by a Curse, *Not to eat or drink till they had killed Paul*, God frustrates their wicked Design, *Acts xxiii. 12.* *Saul* likewise designed

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to kill *David*, made many Attempts, and pursued him; yet could never effect it; for God prevented him; see *1 Sam.* Ch. xviii, xix, xxiii, xxv, xxvi.—The Prophets therefore frequently prophesy the Deliverance and Salvation of the People of God. *Associate yourselves, O ye People, and ye shall be broken in Pieces; take Counsel together, and it shall come to nought,* *Isaiah* viii. 9, 10. *Jer.* xlviii. 30.—God's scattering the *Jews* into many Countries, his Preservation of them, tho' not as a Nation, but agreeable to the precise Prophecies relating to them, or Denunciations against them, are Evidences of this Truth: See *Lev.* xxvi. 31. xlv. 45. *Jer.* xxx. 11. *Ezek.* xi. 16, 17.—And shall I need to mention the remarkable Case of *Herod*, whose Cruelty was notorious, and his Punishment signal.—That this is the Doctrine of our Saviour, may be gathered from those Words, *Matt.* vi. 28. *If God so clothe the Grass of the Field, which To-day is, and To-morrow is cast into the Oven; shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little Faith?* What could the Disciples apprehend by this Saying of our Lord's, less than a particular Providence? They knew the brute Creation, and all the Tribes of Vegetables, were as much the Object of a general Providence as themselves: Nay, if upon any Consideration, God does not recede from the Method of his general Providence in the providential Government of the moral Creation, they could have no Reason to lay aside their Anxiety about their future Support, unless from the Doctrine of *Fate*, that it must be quite insignificant: But this would be no ways consistent with the Words, *how much more?* The plain Sense is evidently this, that a prudent Care and Endeavour after the Things of this Life, was all that was necessary for Christians in any Circumstances; for this Reason, that God did, by the special Interposition of his Providence, over-rule many Events, which otherwise would come to pass; and much more would he, in such Circumstances as theirs, in Obedience to whose Command had left all to follow him, by miraculous Methods, or

by the Use of Means, amply provide for their Support. —That Events, indeed, are not always answerable to second Causes, is plainly asserted by the Prophet. *Let not the wise Man glory in his Wisdom; neither let the rich Man glory in his Riches; neither let the mighty Man glory in his Might*, Jer. ix. 30. For all these are often disappointed: Therefore the *Psalmist* resolves, *I will not Trust in my Bow, neither shall my Sword save me; but it is thou savest us from our Enemies*, Psal. xlv. 6. Wise therefore was the Answer of the King of Israel, 1 Kings xx. 11. *Let not him that girdeth on his Harness boast, but he that putteth it off*. The case of *Nebuchadnezzar* is another remarkable Instance; that the Lord God omnipotent reigneth in the Earth; that he setteth up and putteth down at his Pleasure; and the Design of it is to withdraw Man from his Purpose, and *hide Pride from Man*, as *Job* elegantly expresses it, Ch. xxxiii. 17. And the natural Inference is, *Trust in the Lord with all thine Heart—In all thy Ways acknowledge him, he shall direct thy Path*, Prov. iii. 5.

This is admirably well expressed by the forementioned Author: “Whereas not only the natural World constantly depends on his divine Energy and immediate Acts of Power, but the moral Creation continually lives and moves, and has its Being in God. And so far is this Dependence on the Creator from being any Proof of Imperfection in his Work, that to be denied this divine Energy, and those immediate Acts of Power, would be the total Ruin and Destruction of it.—All Being is derived, except that of the first Cause, therefore all such Being must be dependent, and cannot but be so: And whereas the moral Creation is not passively subject to the Laws of its Direction, the Influences of divine Power, or its divine Energy, cannot be passively subject, or invariably directed by any original Plan, in its Interposals; but may, and most probably does sometimes, yea, frequently in a special Manner, interpose.” *

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But, perhaps, those who object to a particular Providence will readily enough acknowledge, that in some very extraordinary Cases God may interpose, to bring about some Events which would not have been brought about in the Course of a general Providence; yet that this is so far from being the Case, with regard to those Things in general, which are made the Subject of Petition to the supreme Being, that it conveys a disagreeable Idea of God, as if he was immediately concerned with, or regarded every trifling Action or Occurrence in his Creation; that this is too low a Sentiment of the ever-blessed God, &c.

I answer; This Notion is agreeable to the *Epicurean* System of Happiness, who placed it in Indolence and Self-enjoyment: But this is a most debasing Sentiment; as if Operation and Influence imply a sort of Fatigue in the Deity; whereas he is always and necessarily active; nor can the Cessation of his Influences imply any greater Enjoyment of himself, than when their Energies are most extensive. Constant Operation, or Display of Perfection, is perhaps an inseparable Idea of the first Cause.—It has been on this Principle, that some wise Men have called Preservation a continued Creation; there being no less Energy required to preserve than to create: Besides, the Idea of an eternally creative Power, and of constant communicative Goodness, are the most sublime Sentiments we can form of God.

Here it may be proper to note our Opponent's Reasonings with Regard to natural and moral Good and Evil: That the far greater Part of them arises from the original Constitution of Things; that we receive our Beings, different Degrees of Strength of Body and Constitution, as well as different Capacities of Mind; to one are entrusted five, and to another ten Talents; that these are the Occasions of different Degrees of Happiness, and oftentimes, tho' more remotely, of particular Virtues or Vices, abstracted from any Interposition of Providence. Nay, even the Nourishment

and Support of our Lives by Food, is no other than the original Institution of God, a Quality given to Food, not the Effect of particular Providence, or of Prayer.

To this I answer ; Food cannot be supposed to have any inherent Quality to nourish, however natural it might seem, independent of the concurring Operation and Blessing of God. The Concoction of our Food, on which our Health depends, is, so far as it is known, very wonderful and astonishing, as might be usefully illustrated from anatomical and philosophical Observations ; verifying our Saviour's Assertion, *That Man lives not by Bread alone, but by the Word, or Blessing of God*, Matt. vi. And as *Job* elegantly expresses it, *The Visitation of the Almighty preserves our Spirits* : And our Saviour plainly supposes this continual absolute Dependence on God, when he bids us pray, *Give us this Day our daily Bread* ; that he preserves all the Powers of Nature, and conducts all the Operations in that little World of Man, to their proper Use, as well as by his Blessing enables us to procure the necessary Support ; else to the Affluent this must seem an useless Injunction. It is commonly said, *That our Breath is in our Nostrils*, because it passeth thro' them ; and is there not a free Passage for it to pass out of them ? What visible Tye is there between Soul and Body ? it is God that holds our Souls in Life, and *in him we live, move, and have our Beings*. And tho' from the different Nature and Quantity of some Kinds of Food, and from the unseasonable and excessive Use of them, Men may sometimes incur Disorders ; that the Repetition thereof, which is too common, don't oftner destroy Health, impair the Constitution, and put a final Period to Life, is justly ascribed to the intervening Providence of God ; and to deny or question it, because this does not always appear to be the Case, is no more a conclusive Argument, than to say, the Winds and Rain are not under the Direction of God, because not always

always in Time, Continuance, or Degree, suited to the Wants or Wishes of every Individual.

As to the different Degrees of Strength, Soundness, and Sprightliness in the human Frame, being a natural Good, and the contrary a natural Evil, in the general Course of Providence; and the Diversity and Difference of Constitution in the human Frame, having a great Influence on the natural Passions and Appetites, rendering some Virtues easy and natural, and their opposite Vices not so easily besetting us; while Persons of different Constitutions, and of weaker and more infirm Bodies, shall find different Propensities, and be under some Disadvantages as to their natural and moral Capacity, &c.

To this I answer, That a pretty extensive Observation may convince us, that these are not necessarily the Cause of much Happiness or Misery. Providence oftentimes changes the Scene and Event; and if this was not the Case, Talents of Nature and natural Good come from God, and require suitable Improvements. - To the other Part, it may be observed here, as it was by *Tully* long since, that every Man cannot be obliged to sustain the same Character, as the naturally Bold and Timorous; but every one has Duties, and a Sphere of Action, wherein to exercise his reasonable moral Nature, and in that approve himself to God.

In another View of this seeming Difference and Disparity, this is the declared Method of the divine Government; *To whom much is given, the more will be required.* That God will equitably consider all the Circumstances of his Creatures, and make the most favourable Allowances for all the Disadvantage, which have attended them.

S E C T. II.

ANOTHER Objection to particular Providence, and consequently to the Prevalence of Prayer, is, that many of the natural Evils, as well

as good Events, are the Effects of Chance, or Accident.

What Men inconsiderately call Chance, or Accident, is really nothing at all, but mere empty Words; and there is no such Thing strictly and philosophically true; it being evident, that those Words do not signify any Thing really existing, any thing that is truly an Agent, or the Cause of an Event; but this manner of Speaking arises from the Ignorance of real and immediate Causes: Evident it is to all, that there can be no Effect without a Cause; and therefore, what some ascribe to *Chance*, others ascribe to *Fate* and *Necessity*: But *Fate* also is itself nothing at all; nor is there any other efficient or proper Cause of any Event, but only the free-will of a rational, intelligent Creature, acting within the Sphere of his limited Capacity; and the supreme God directing Things according to the wise Laws of Government, and over-ruling Events he does not see fit to permit.

Again, every Effect that is the Event of, and proceeds from a real Cause, must proceed mediately or immediately from that which has a true Existence and active Power; and there is no more Difficulty in an omnipresent Mind, attending to every Thing at one and the same Time, than in an Event's being brought about according to the Course of Nature, or natural Causes. For what are they but those Laws and Powers which God hath implanted in the several Parts of Matter, to make them the Instruments of fulfilling his Will? And from hence it may be inferred, that natural Effects are in every Deed the Operation of God, and the Arguments against a particular Providence on that Account, are without Foundation.—Indeed, if the Course of Nature, and those Things we call second Causes, were independent upon Providence, there would be good Reason to ask, what Benefit there could be either from Prayer or Thanksgiving? But on the contrary, Trouble and Affliction do not arise from *Chance*, blind *Fate*, and accountable *Accident*; but from that God who is
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the supreme Origin of all Things, and governs the World; that our Times are in the Hands of God, by whose Power *we* were created, under whose Care and Blessing *we* are supported, in whose Presence *we* perpetually walk, and in whom *we live, move, and have our Beings.*

S E C T. III.

BUT notwithstanding these Observations in reference to the divine Government as extending to all Events whenever he pleases, it is objected.

That Men being formed for Society, his Connection with and Dependence on others, renders him capable of deriving or conferring much of natural and moral Good, and subjects him likewise to a Variety of natural and moral Evils.

In answer hereto, it may be observed, if it was consistent with infinite Wisdom to create free Beings, and place them in a social State, it cannot be repugnant to his moral Government to permit, in a considerable Degree, the natural tho' calamitous Events and Consequences of their Conduct, with regard to others.

But tho' in many Instances it be admitted, Providence hath not over-ruled the Designs of evil Men, Reason suggests to us, that this has been often the Case; else how should Good and Evil be so far balanced as they are upon the Whole? And Scripture, as well as civil History, furnishes us with many Instances of the divine Interposition, for the Prevention of intended Evil, and bringing Good out of it; and even making use of those Men as Instruments of Good, when there was not the least apparent Intention in the Agent. Thus when *Esau* was coming against *Jacob* with 400 Men, and *Jacob* was afraid, God changed *Esau's* Heart, so that when he met *Jacob*, he embraced him, *Gen.* xxxii. 6, 7, 8. God also defeated the King of *Syria's* Design against *Elisha*, *2 Kings* vi. 13, 14. And when *Israel* were but few in Number, when they went from one Nation to another, God suffered

no Man to do them Harm; yea, he reprov'd Kings for their Sake, *Pf.* cv. 12—15. Thus *David* reasoned and comforted himself concerning *Shimei's* cursing him; saying, *Let him alone, and let him curse. It may be the Lord will look upon my Affliction, and that the Lord will requite me Good for his Cursing,* 2 Sam. xvi. 11, 12. And many remarkable Occurrences in our *English* Annals confirm this; Witness the Gun-powder Plot; the Defeat of the invincible Armada, &c.—And if the prevention, suspending, or removal of Evil, have been in a Variety of Instances the Object of the divine Providence, we have abundant Reason not to look on our Connection with others, separate and distinct from it; but that God often does prevent, remove, compensate, and sanctify present Evils, so as to render them subservient to our Advantage. And as to the Advantages likewise derived to us from our fellow Creatures, these too are under his Cognizance; he can continue, heighten and improve them. And shall we imagine, that because the divine Goodness has formed Mankind for Society, and rendered them capable of social Virtues, and of subserving the Happiness of Society, our Dependence is thereby lessened on the divine Providence? Surely no.

From hence arises one great Evidence of a future State of Retribution, as well from the Wisdom and Justice, as from the Goodness of the Deity; a Principle not only suggested by human Reason, but fully confirmed by Revelation; that where Providence has not seen fit to interpose, and prevent many Evils that have befallen the Virtuous, nor otherwise compensate them in this World; in the future State of Retribution, the Rectitude and Perfection of the divine Government will shine forth uneclipsed by present abstruse and difficult Occurrences.

To this we may add, that in any Instances, wherein Virtue and Happiness are promoted by the voluntary Act of another, it is agreeable to God's original Institution of civil Society, and to his moral Government,

as well as the inherent Goodness of his Nature, to reward such benevolent Purposes, those Acts of social Duty performed in Conformity to the Dictates of Reason, and in obedience to the divine Command. But, notwithstanding, we have Reason to conclude, from the perfect Rectitude of his Government, these Favours will be considered as extraordinary Means and Advantages to greater Degrees of Virtue, such as demand and require a suitable Improvement.

S E C T. IV.

Furthermore, there is another Objection, which, considered in all the Parts of it, is the Main and Principal, viz. That Man is a moral and intelligent Agent, endued with Reason and Consciousness as the Rule of his Conduct; which, with the external Advantages already afforded, are sufficient to the Knowledge and Practice of acceptable Degrees in Virtue. That if supernatural Assistance were necessary, the Equity and Goodness of the Deity implies it would be communicated without the Sollicitation of such finite Beings.—Secondly, that we have no just Idea of divine, supernatural Assistance so much pleaded for, as the Encouragement of Christians (to be obtained by Prayer) as we cannot define it from its sensible Operation, we cannot reasonably ascertain it from its Effects; therefore that the moral Tendency of Prayer is the only Motive to it, and that even that End is effectually answered by frequent, serious and impartial Consideration of ourselves, of our Nature, Relation and ultimate End; on the Being and Perfections of God, which are the Rule and Motives to Virtue.

To this I answer, Tho' there is a Law and Rule of Action which arises from the Nature and Relation of Things, and as Truth is uniform and consistent, so that the Reason and Understanding of Man are capable in some Measure, of discovering the Difference of Actions, with respect to his Duty towards God, his Neigh-

Neighbour, and himself; and of deducing such Motives as might naturally and strongly influence the Will; yet it must be acknowledged, there always were, and must always necessarily exist, such Circumstances in the Nature and Relation of many Cases, that it is impossible for the human Mind to penetrate (universally) into the Truth of Things, nor will it be possible from thence for the Mind or Understanding always to have a proper overbearing Influence on the Will.

What were the Degrees of Perfection in Reason and Understanding, or Tractableness of the Will in which Man was at first created, it is difficult to determine: It is not only highly probable, but very certain, that he enjoyed some greater Degrees of Perfection in his Nature; some peculiar Dignity and Privileges in his Situation, as well as some Ingredients of Happiness more than were communicated to his Posterity; and which might have been improved to greater Perfection of Virtue and Happiness. Tho' it be certain, we his Descendants are rational and moral Agents; it must be acknowledged, our Circumstances in the World expose us to more and greater Temptations, which render the Discharge of our Duty exceedingly difficult (for the Proof of this I need only appeal to the Reason and Experience of every Man, and the Testimony of his own Heart, as no Man liveth and sinneth not) to say that our Duty becomes hereby impracticable is most absurd, and implies a Contradiction, because whatever is impracticable must cease to be a Duty, inasmuch as no Agent can be obliged to Impossibilities. Now since the Posterity of *Adam* were since the Fall and Degeneracy of the first Pair, placed in this State of Trial and Probation, and endued with such Powers and Capacities as we now enjoy, it must follow as a necessary Consequence, that they are fitly adapted to this State of Trial, and the Circumstances in which we are placed; and likewise, that the universal Parent, the supremely wise and

and good God, would require nothing more of his frail and imperfect Creatures than was in their Power, by the proper Exertion of their natural Abilities, or which is all one, according to the Wisdom and Rectitude of God's moral Government, that wherein supernatural Assistance was wanting to raise them to the Dignity, and restore them to the Lustre of the divine Image, or in other Words, to the Performance of their religious and moral Duties, it was promised, and would be communicated in Proportion to the Exigencies of his Creatures, on certain very easy Conditions.

Again, if the Perfection of our Natures were sufficiently great to apprehend, resolve upon, and even to perform our Duty in a very high Degree, our Dependence must be absolutely on God for the Preservation and Continuance of those Faculties, for enabling them to perform their respective Offices. In this View of the Nature and State of Man we are led to extend our Ideas of the divine Goodness, in the promised Assistance: That after it appeared, that neither Men nor Angels were to be trusted solely to their own Will; and that, notwithstanding the Reason of Mankind must, in most Cases, approve what is right; many Circumstances in the present imperfect State are frequently occurring that bias the Understanding and warp the Affections, and render the Will untoward and untractable. That Men stand in Need of farther Assistance, and by this gracious Method of affording it, adequate to the Weakness and Wants of such frail depending Creatures, we are encouraged to have our constant Dependence more on God, whereby our Virtues are strengthened and our Faith and Hope are increased.

But, perhaps, the supernatural Aid, or the Assistance of the holy Spirit, is doubted of for want of a sensible Evidence of its Operation. When our Saviour had represented to *Nicodemus* the Necessity of a new Birth for obtaining the Favour of God, and eternal Life,

Life, in the third Chapter of St. *John's* Gospel, v. 3. *Except a Man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God*; this was a strange Doctrine, and appeared indeed *extravagant to Nicodemus*, who, by an unaccountable Mistake overlooked the Figure, and understood the Words of natural Birth; and upon this Foot it was reasonable for him to ask, *How can a Man be born when he is old? Can he enter the second Time into his Mother's Womb and be born?* To this our Saviour replied, that the Thing would not appear to be altogether so mysterious when rightly apprehended, as might be illustrated by a very familiar Instance. *Marvel not*, says he, *that I said unto thee, ye must be born again. The Wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the Sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, nor whither it goeth: So is every one that is born of the Spirit.* Which Words I have somewhere seen thus judiciously paraphrased:—"That even in the natural World there are many Things in themselves so subtle, that we cannot at all discern them with our Eyes, which yet are very manifest, and very great in their Effects. The Wind is a Thing altogether invisible, and no Man can behold its Motion, even when it bloweth with the greatest Violence; yet, that there is such a Thing is evident enough; and the Effects of it are sufficiently known. Thus, therefore, that Regeneration or Renovation of the Heart and Manners, which is worked in a Man by the Efficacy of true Religion, and the Operation of the Spirit of God, tho' in itself it be invisible, and not at all discernable by Sense, yet in its Effects is very great and plain, and really as manifest and considerable a Change, to all the Purposes of eternal Life and Happiness, as the Birth of Man is in respect of this mortal Life." And we may argue from Effects the Operation of the Spirit with almost equal Certainty, as we may the Wisdom, the Power and Goodness of the Deity from the Order, Beauty, and Usefulness of the several Parts of the Creation, or infer a Providence from the Continuance

tinuance of the several Powers in Nature : The Return of Seasons, or any other visible Effects in the Universe ; tho', as the Psalmist elegantly expresses it, *Clouds and Darknefs are round about him ; the Heavens declare his Righteousness, and all the People see his Glory,* Psalms xciii. 2—5. And that God compasseth our Path, is every-where about us, and within us, tho' we do not apprehend his Presence.

But, more particularly, that the supreme and infinite Creator may have an immediate and easy Access to the human Mind whenever he pleases, is beyond all reasonable Contradiction, as he originally formed it, he must be thoroughly acquainted with its internal Frame, with all the different Ways in which it is capable of being impressed, and with what Variety and Degree of Force Impressions may be excited and fixed in it, consistently with the natural and regular Exercise of its moral Powers, and its Design and Use in the Creation. And whatever his infinite Wisdom knows to be possible, what it sees fit his Power must enable him to effect. There is not, therefore, the least Difficulty in admitting that the first Cause of all Things can influence the Wills of Men ; and that he does it too in a Manner and Measure consistent with moral Agency, may pretty fully appear from the following Considerations.

That if God governs the World at all, he must do it in the most perfect Manner, *i. e.* by such Methods, as are most worthy his infinite Wisdom and Goodness ; and every wise End, that may upon the Whole be promoted by a particular Providence, must in the Nature of Things, be a Reason, why it should take Place : And for the same Reasons the Government of God is properly suited to the Nature of those Beings who are the Subjects of it, and adapted to their peculiar Exigencies ; and nothing can be more suitable to the Perfections of God, than by a gentle and gracious Communication with the Mind, to assist penitent Sinners in reforming their evil Habits ; to
strengthen

strengthen the Resolutions of the Good and Virtuous, and render their Duty easy and delightful; to supply inward Strength for extraordinary Trials, and inward Support and Comfort in special Exigencies: And all this may be done by suggesting proper Thoughts to the Mind, in a clear and strong Light, with that Degree and Force of Impression, which is naturally adapted to counterbalance contrary Prejudices, and excite and fix the Attention. Bringing to Remembrance Motives to Reflection and Solicitude:—Presenting to the Mind in a clearer View some important Truths,—striking it with animating Views of the Beauty and Excellence of Religion—with just Apprehension of the Advantage and Happiness flowing from the Exercise of it;—the Shame, Sorrow and Misery, inseparable from Vice; by which the Appetites and Passions shall receive a proper Check;—new and more worthy Purposes be inspired, and the Will determined to the most laudable Pursuits. In this View of it the divine Assistance may be communicated, in a Way perfectly agreeable to the Make and Constitution of the human Mind, and consistent with the due and regular Exercise of its inherent Faculties, persuasive, yet strong and awakening; and whatever Difference there may be supposed to be in the Degree of Light and Evidence, yet we find by Experience it is scarce ever to be distinguished from the Suggestions and Operations of our own Reason, and that we are still left to our own Choice and Determination, and consequently to the perfect Exercise of our natural Liberty. Thus a judicious Author observes,

“ There are frequent Instances of the divine Energy, or immediate Acts of God’s Power, aiding the moral Creature in the right Exercise of those Powers and Capacities implanted in him; so that the given Influences do no Way oppose or offer Violence to the Freedom of the Agent, but assist in the same Direction in which the Creature acts, either by adding Strength, or removing Part of the Difficulty; so providing

viding for the Welfare or Safety of the Subject; and this without the least Violence to general Laws. Whereas miraculous Interposition, I apprehend, does not co-operate with general Laws, but operates without them, or contrary to them."

Another ingenious Author on this Subject says, "Taking for granted then what I should think no one would deny, who has duly weighed and considered the apostolical Writings, that the Assistances of God's holy Spirit are there promised to such Christians of all Ages as may stand in Need of them. The general Manner in which it acts or operates upon Men, we may I (humbly conceive with great Reason and Probability) suppose to be by *raising such suitable Ideas in, or making such particular Impressions upon their Minds*, as may influence them (if they are to be moved by any such Impressions at all) more seriously to consider and reflect upon, than they otherwise would do, the many and indispensable Obligations they lie under to put in Execution the several Duties of Religion and Virtue, and the various Motives and Inducements which the Gospel makes use of to excite them to, and animate them in the Discharge of these Duties, and to discourage and deter them from every sinful and licentious Practice *.

But still it must be owned, that as we know not the Variety or Force of natural Impressions that may be excited within us, nor understand the Extent of mere mechanical Powers; so we should not pretend always to assert, that every good Disposition and becoming Resolution of Mind, is the Effect of an immediate Influence or Operation. Religion only teaches us, that God is ready to afford us all necessary and proper Aids, without laying down any certain Rule by which it can be known, when, in what Manner, or in what Proportion these Aids are vouchsafed to us. And many, I doubt not, have experienced at some Time

* The Rev. Mr. Edwards in his *Doctrine of irresistible Grace* prov'd to have no Foundation, Page 354.

or other, a conscious Evidence of the divine Influence on their own Minds; corresponding with the Promise thereof in the Scripture, where it is always represented as the Privilege of the Righteous, as the Means of their Improvement in Religion, and as the Reward of it by the Joy, the Hope, and the Happiness communicated thereby; and what is more immediately to my present Purpose, the Effects of their sincere, frequent, and fervent Prayer.

Again, fifthly, the Doctrine of the Prevalency of Prayer is represented as inconsistent with the Perfection of God's Government, as it extends to all Worlds, without Partiality of Kingdoms, Societies, or Individuals; and therefore that it can by no Means appropriate his special Favours to particular Nations, Families or Persons, and that the moral Tendency of Prayer was the sole End of God in appointing, and ought to be our End in the Performance of it.

To this I answer, Though the moral Influence of Prayer may be the principal Cause or Reason of God's injoining this Duty; this by no Means excludes our having a farther View to the obtaining and securing his special Favour. For that Prayer which is influential on ourselves, is a proper Motive for God to do what he would not otherwise have seen fit to do for us, and whenever the divine Interposition may be expected as the Answer of Prayer, it always supposes Prayer suitably qualified by Faith, Humility, Fervency, Submission, &c. It also supposes when prevalent in Behalf of a Nation, the Justice of their Cause, or that they who supplicate divine Favour are the People of God, and ask with Disposition and Resolution, thankfully to improve the Blessing implored.

If it be said, God is in himself disposed to do whatever is proper for him to do, antecedent to such Address, and that he would do it whether addressed or not*.

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* See Rev. Mr. *Fleming's* Remarks on Mr. *Chubb's* Vindication.

I answer, A Man under the firm Persuasion of this would readily conclude, that his Petitions would be as vain as they were useless: How could he implore Aid in Distress, if he was persuaded that whether he did Petition or not, what was proper for God to do for him, antecedent to this Address would be done for him whether he prayed or not? So that any such Aid he wanted which was not proper then, although he prayed ever so earnestly, and was ever so much altered for the better in his own Temper and Disposition, such Aid still would continue to be improper, and therefore it would be to no Purpose that he should either pray, or pray earnestly for such Aid, P. 104.

But is not this Sentiment absolutely repugnant to the Scriptures? When the Apostle to the *Hebrews* expressly declares of Prayer or coming to God, that if it is an acceptable Address the Supplicant must believe that he is, and that he is the Rewarder of them that diligently seek him. And does not the Scriptures every where enjoin it as the Condition of obtaining such Blessings as we stand in Need of? Now, if it be a Condition, we cannot reasonably expect such Favours without it; but if we may expect the same Blessings whether we pray or not, it must be indeed insignificant, and cannot be called a Condition; so that although we are not to think our Prayers will alter the Nature of God, yet we may believe (I apprehend from good Reason) that if we diligently seek him, his Conduct towards us will be directed and influenced by such seeking; and that by such asking we shall receive, by such seeking we shall find, and by such knocking it shall be opened to us; which receiving and finding and opening would not have been the proper Vouchsafements of the Deity, had we not thus attended to Prayer, that is, asked and sought, and knocked.—Page 105. Our Author adds, p. 108.

“ The fervent Prayer of a righteous Man is not only available for a Man’s Self by rendering him a more suitable and proper Object of God’s special Care and

Love; but such Prayer has always been and is yet available for others. A Man cannot pray earnestly for another, but he must feel the Ardour of a divine Compassion seasoning his Prayer, in which Temper he bears an high Resemblance of his Maker; and of Consequence we may hope, that the great Respect the Deity has to such a Temper, will render it fit he should honour and encourage it, by regarding and answering such Intercessions; *** So that upon the Whole, although we must think of God as always disposed to do whatever is proper for him to do; yet we must not think that the same Thing was proper for him to do antecedent to our addressing of him, as was proper after we had addressed him; or that he would do it whether we addressed him or not. No, so far from this, we must look upon Prayer as an appointed Means of our Safety and Happiness."

And as these Ideas of Prayer are most consistent with Scripture; so I apprehend it is to the Sense of Mens Minds in general. When we present our solemn Wishes to Heaven, can we mean, or intend no more by it, than that it might have a moral Influence upon our Minds, and that we might have a Disposition fit to receive and improve the Mercy. Suppose it a Mercy relative to myself of a temporal or spiritual Nature, do I not pray with an Intention to prevail on the Deity to bestow the Favour I need; and if Intercession for others is the Subject of my Prayer, must not it be naturally considered that I am performing a Condition on which God himself has promised to shew Favour to others. Indeed, if we compare the self-conscious Ideas we form of this Duty, it appears very much to clash with the modern Representations of the Design and Ends of it, and it will also appear, if we consider and compare the Reasonings of these Gentlemen in its several Parts, that there is a real Inconsistence in them. In fine, both the Scripture, and our own Consciousness, proposes the obtaining a Thing for which we address God as the End of

that Address ; the other declares, that Prayer has no manner of Tendency to procure any Aid or Benefit prayed for ; for whatever would be done by Almighty God, as proper for him to do, would be done whether we addressed him or not.

S E C T. V.

“**T**H E kind Parent of the Universe has evidently recommended an Application to him, and Acts of Affiance and Dependence on him, by making himself known to such, as the God that heareth, by his answering Prayers. He has made it the interest of his Creatures, to unbosom themselves before him, and has always made good his Word of Promise, that he will be found of them that seek him ; and the Testimony of good Men, in all Ages, proves, that they who put their Trust in him shall never be ashamed.” Thus *Jacob* encourages himself and his Friends, *Gen.* xxxiv. 4. *Let us arise and go up to Bethel, and I will make there an Altar unto God, who answered me in the Day of my Distress*—And when *Samuel* was intreated by the *Israelites* to pray for them, *1 Sam.* vii. 8. It is likewise said, that *Samuel* cried unto the Lord, and the Lord heard him. And there are many places where *David* is recorded to Pray with this Expectation and Hope, as *Psalms* xxvii. 7—viii. 6—xxxviii. 15.—cii. 2—cviii. 6—cliii. 1. Thus *David* in his Distress prayed the Lord to turn the Council of *Achitophel*, *2 Sam.* xv. 32. And for this Mercy *David*’s Thanksgiving is mentioned, *Ch.* xxi. 7. At other Times we find him thankfully acknowledging the divine Goodness, in the happy Experience that God had answered his Prayers ; as *Pf.* xxxi. 22—vi. 9.—xxxiv. 4. and lxvi. 16. *Come and hear all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my Soul. I cried unto him with my Mouth, and he was extolled with my Tongue. If I regard Iniquity in my Heart, the Lord will not hear me.*

E 3

But

Rev. Mr. Fleming’s Remarks, P. 102.

But verily God hath heard me, he hath attended to the Voice of my Prayer. Blessed be God who hath not turned away my Prayer, nor his Mercy from me.—'Tis expressly said of *Manasseth*, when he was in Affliction, he besought the Lord, and that the Lord heard his Supplication, and was intreated of him, *2 Chron. xxxiii. 12.* *Solomon* makes many noble Appeals to God in the firm Belief of the Propitiousness of his Nature, and his Readiness to hear and answer Prayer, *2 Chron. vi. Daniel* and his Friends, in their great Strait, prays to God, *Dan. vi. 13.* and to this ascribes his Deliverance, *v. 22*—And the Mariners that were in the Tempest made this their Resource, *Jonah i. 4, 5. &c.*

There are some Instances which give us Reason to conclude, that God sometimes regards Prayer as a good Action, tho' performed by a bad Person; seeing with respect to *Ahab*, we are told he sold himself to work Wickedness; yet when he humbled himself at the divine Threat, all his former Wickedness did not make that Action bad, neither was it a Change in the Nature of God to approve of it. For as the Action was good in itself, so God approved of it in wicked *Ahab*, and averted the Evil threatned for his Sake, *1 Kings xxi. 29.* And of *Israel* it is said, they had provoked God, nevertheless he regarded their Affliction when he heard their Cry, and he remembered for them his Covenant, and repented according to the Multitude of his Mercies, *Psal. cvi. 43, 44, 45.* The *Ninevites* we find took Encouragement from this Idea of Compassion in the Deity, to make their Supplication to him by an Interrogation that implied a Confidence in his Mercy. They cried mightily unto the Lord, *Jonah iii. 8.* saying, *Who can tell if God will turn from his Anger, that we perish not;* and the Event verified their Hopes, *v. 10.*

Besides these Testimonies in favour of it, we find the Neglect of Prayer attributed to the want of a true Knowledge of God, and consequently of a proper Trust in him, and Duty to him. Thus God by the

the Prophet upbraids the *Jews*, *Who art thou that thou shouldst be afraid of a Man that shall die, and forgettest the Lord thy Maker; that hath stretched forth the Heavens, and laid the Foundations of the Earth*, *Isai. xli. 12, 13.* And the Prophet *Hosea* represents God as threatening to withdraw his Presence from them, to reclaim them to their Duty, *Hof. i. 15. I will go and return unto my Place, until they acknowledge their Fault, and seek my Face.*

For as it has been already observed, God is the original Fountain of our Beings, and of all the Blessings and Mercies we either do, or can enjoy; and as he perfectly hears all our Prayers, and knows all our Wants and Designs, so he hath in himself an underrived Ability, and an almighty never-failing Power to help us; and hath an absolute underived Right, with the strongest Disposition, to exercise that Ability for our Good, if we are the proper Objects of his Kindness; and when we put up our Prayers to him duly qualified, we have the most rational Ground to hope for Success.

S E C T. VI.

ANOTHER weighty Consideration to enforce this Duty, under such Expectation and Hope, arises from the frequent Examples of good Men, pleading with God. This a late Author * considers as one Part of Prayer, and indeed the Language of Scripture runs greatly in Favour of it.

Abraham, who had peculiar Discoveries made to him by God, stood before the Lord to intercede for the People of *Sodom*; and that rational, essential, immutable Truth, delivered under the Form of a Question, *Shall not the Judge of the whole Earth do right?* We find was the Motive, and not the Hindrance of his Intercession, *Gen. xviii. 25.*

E 4

*Hezekiah** *Dr. Watts.*

Hezekiah pleads with God for his Recovery, from the Integrity of his own Heart and Life, 2 Kings xx. 1--6.

David pleads the Cause of Religion, *Psal. ix. 10. What Profit is there in my Blood? When I go down into the Pit, shall the Dust praise thee? Hear, O Lord, and have Mercy upon me.*

David pleads his Experience of many Instances of divine Providence, in which Answers were given to Prayer, *Psal. xviii. 6—xxx. 2—viii. 11.—xxxi. 22— and xxxiv. 6.* and refers to the Experience of others; *Our Fathers cried unto Thee, and were delivered, Psal. xxii. 4, 5.* David also pleads the Promise of the divine Being; *Remember thy Word unto thy Servant, upon which thou hast caused me to hope.*

Asa cried unto the Lord, when the Host of 10,000 came against Judah, and pleads the Omnipotence of God, saying, *Lord, it is nothing for Thee to help, whether with many or few, 2 Chron. xiv. 11.* And *Jehosaphat* thus expostulates with God, 2 Chron. xx. *O Lord God of our Fathers, art thou not God in Heaven, and rulest not thou amongst all the Kingdoms of the Heathen? In whose Hand is Power and Might, so that none is able to withstand thee. Art thou not our God, who didst drive out the Inhabitants of this Land before thy People Israel, and gave it to the Seed of Abraham, thy Friend, for ever? Who have built a Sanctuary therein, for thy Name-sake; saying, If when Evil cometh upon us, the Sword, Judgment, or Pestilence, or Famine, we stand before thee in this House, for thy Name is there, and we make Supplication, thou wilt hear and help. Now, behold, the Children of Ammon, and Moab, and Mount Sier, are coming against us. Wilt thou not judge them, O Lord; for we have no Might.—Our Eyes are upon thee. And the Answer was an Answer of Comfort; Be not dismayed by reason of the Multitude; for the Battle is not yours, but God's—The Church in her low Condition prays earnestly, Look down from Heaven, and behold from the Habitation*

bitation of thy Holiness and thy Glory, where is thy Zeal and thy Strength, and the sounding of thy Bowels and Mercy towards us? Are they restrained, O Lord, thou art our Father, and our Redeemer, and thy Name is from everlasting, Isaiah lxiii. 15, 16.

If it be said, the greatest Importunity has been made use of, where there has been no visible Proof of Success,

I would observe, that God does many Times answer Prayers in Effect, tho' not in a manner evident by its Operation, or as we have desired by Prayer. And accordingly, when we pray that God would render us happy in this Word, we ought not to be anxiously solicitous about the Manner of it. Perhaps, if we might prescribe to the Deity, Riches might be the Sum of our Wish; when God knows, probably, that Riches would have a far contrary Tendency, and may in Kindness with-hold them from us; and he may answer our Prayer, by disposing us to Contentment and Acquiescence in his Providence under the present Circumstances: Or, if Affliction of Body is an Evil we wish to be removed, his Goodness may regard our Petition; but his Wisdom may not see fit to remove it at that Time: For it may be intended for Correction, and to work a Reformation, to dispose to greater Seriousness, to humble the Mind, and check that earnest Pursuit of present Things, which is suitable only to Things of a religious and substantial Nature. In short, that God will regard Prayer at such Time, and in such manner as Circumstances render fit, and may be most conducive to his Creatures Good.

From hence it appears we are not authorised to expect, that every Blessing we ask or pray for shall be granted; no, this we refer to his Wisdom and Goodness; being well assured they will be heard and answered, in such manner as these his Perfections shall direct. "For tho' Petition for the divine Aid is an Acknowledgment of our own weak and dependent State, and this should make us look for Help from above, yet

yet not from hence to look on this as a State of Re-tribution.

S E C T. VII.

IT deserves also to be considered, that the gracious Promise of divine Assistance in this Duty, is an Argument that God will regard, and answer it. Thus God promises, *I will pour out upon them the Spirit of Prayer and Supplication*, Ezek. xii. 10. And the Psalmist addressing himself to God, says, *Thou wilt prepare their Hearts, and cause thine Ear to hear*, Psal. x. 17. And St. Paul, Romans viii. 26. *The Spirit helpeth our Infirmities: For we know not what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit itself maketh Intercession for us*. And in the next Verse adds, *Maketh Intercession for us, or in us, according to the Will of God*. 'Tis frequently represented as the Spirit's Office to prepare the Heart; to excite good Motions and Dispositions. Hence we are encouraged to pray and hope for it, and are commanded *not to quench the Spirit*, 1 Thess. v. 19. See also 1 Cor. iii. 16. 1 Thess. iv. 8. Gal. iv. 6. And our Saviour encouraged all his Disciples to hope for it, and confirms the Doctrine from the Argument of God's paternal Relation to his Creatures. If earthly Parents know how to give good Gifts unto their Children (who are ignorant, partial, and selfish) *How much more shall your heavenly Father give his holy Spirit to them that ask him*, Luke xi. 13. Gal. iv. 6. Forming us to a Child-like Temper and Disposition, and aiding us in the Discharge of this Duty. *For we all have Access by one Spirit*, Ephes. ii. 18. And Christians are emboldened to pray to him, because he hath given them of his Spirit, enabling them to cry *Abba Father*, Gall. iv. 16. *He beareth Witness with our Spirits that we are his Children*. And may I not ask, as the great Being is inclined, by the absolute Goodness of his Nature, to desire the Happiness of all his Creatures, can it be at all absurd to suppose, that he will at all Times be ready to afford them such

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Degrees of Assistance as are necessary in the Pursuit of true Wisdom and Virtue? And since those Principles on which Prayer is founded, are the most worthy and honourable Sentiments we can form of God, it necessarily follows, that there is equal Reason to ask for, and expect those *supernatural Aids*, from the exuberant Goodness of the divine Being, as ~~to~~ implore and hope to enjoy the *common Blessings* of Life, or deprecate the innocent Calamities of it, which will be allowed an instinctive Principle.

The Command, the Directions, and the Example of Jesus Christ, confirm this Truth. When the Disciples of our Lord asked him to teach them to pray, he immediately gives them a short but comprehensive Form of Prayer, *Matt. vi.* and commands them when they prayed, to say after that Manner; and in a Variety of Places already mentioned, he encourages all his Disciples to *pray frequently*, to *pray in secret*, to *watch unto Prayer*; and asserts in the plainest Language, that such Prayer would be accepted, regarded, and answered.

S E C T. VIII.

I Shall here take Occasion more particularly to consider the Import and natural Inferences that may be deduced from those two Parables which our Lord spake to inforce the Performance of this Duty, founded on the Motive of its Efficacy; one is in *Luke xi.* just after his giving his Disciples a Form of Prayer, v. 5. *Jesus said unto them, which of you shall have a Friend, and shall go unto him at Midnight, and shall say unto him, Friend, lend me three Loaves; for a Friend of mine in his Journey is come to me, and I have nothing to set before him: And he from within shall answer and say, I cannot rise to give thee. — I say unto you, though he will not rise to give him, because he is his Friend, yet because of his Importunity, he will rise and give him as many as he needeth, ver. 8 and 19. And I say unto you, ask, and it shall be*

be given you, &c. And in Chap. xviii. ver. 2 to 8, He spake a Parable unto this End, that Men ought always to pray, and not to faint; saying, there was in a City a Judge, which feared not God, nor regarded Man; and there was a Widow in that City, and she came unto him, saying, Avenge me of my Adversary; and he would not for a while: But afterwards he said within himself, I will avenge her, lest by her continual Coming she weary me: And the Lord said, Hear what the unjust Judge saith; and shall not God avenge his own Elect, who cry Day and Night unto him, though he bear long with them? I tell you that he will avenge them.

It is obvious at first View, that every Part of these Parables are not absolutely and strictly applicable to God: For God cannot be hereby intended to be represented as averse to the Assistance of his Creatures, or under the Character given of the unjust Judge. A proper Attention to the Design of these Parables, and comparing them with other Passages of Scripture, may afford us a just Rule to judge of them. 1st, They plainly suggest that God is not inexorable; but that Pity and Compassion, or what is analogous to them, may be excited in the Deity. 2dly, They point out, that notwithstanding he may not see fit immediately to answer the Prayers of his Creatures, and though he may, for the present, afford them no signal Evidences of his Regard to their Intreaties, he will, if they continue in their Duty, answer their Prayers in a Manner most conducive to their Welfare. 3dly, It may be inferred, from its being the Requirement of God (his Authority considered) and the Reasonableness of that Command from its moral Tendency of it to the Creature, that it is a Duty indispensable, and that we may have no Reason to expect the Favour unless we ask for it.—Not that mere Importunity prevails with God to give us those Things which he is unwilling to grant, but because it becomes us to be fervent and earnest, as it testifies our Faith and Confidence in the Goodness of God, and discovers a just Sense of our

own Wants, and that we set a true Value upon his Blessings and Favours, as worth all the Earnestness and Importunity we can use; and the Success of our Prayers may be said to depend upon our Importunity, as it is performing the Condition on which the Promise is made. And as this Doctrine appears deducible from these Parables, so I apprehend it is consistent with the general Tenor of Scripture.

Here are two Considerations that present themselves, and claim our Notice in this Place, deducible from the preceding;

I. If the sole End of Prayer is only to affect the Creature, and prepare the Mind for the Reception of Favours; this could not be the Case of the holy, harmless and undefiled Jesus, whom God has characterised as his only begotten Son, in whom he was always well pleased: He must therefore be ever fitly disposed for the Reception of such Blessings as he stood in Need of. Yet at the same Time we find him very frequent and fervent in the Use of it, which implies that it was intended not to affect and influence himself only; but that conformable to, or consistent with the supreme Perfection in the Appointment of it; it had a proper, real and visible Influence on the Deity, and the Event confirms this, for he was heard in that he feared.

II. Another Observation drawn from our Lord's Prayers, and of his being heard and answered, confirms what I before advanced; that God does sometimes accept, though he may not see fit to answer, or he may answer, though not in the Manner desired. Our Lord's Prayer, that if it was possible the Cup might pass from him, we may reasonably conclude would have been answered, had it been consistent with the infinite Wisdom of God: And his devout, ardent Request, attended with an exemplary Submission to the divine Will, when under the strong Impressions

pressions of Fear, was evidently answered, though not by a Removal of that Cup, but by an Angel sent to comfort him.

And this by the Way informs us of one Method in which the kind Father of Mankind imparts Aid under extraordinary Conflicts, viz. "By his heavenly Messengers." And the same Apostle tells us, *Heb. i. 14.* *That they are all ministring Spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be the Heirs of Salvation:* These by the Influences they receive from the divine Spirit, impart Strength and Comfort to the Children of Men; so that though the Law could boast of being given by the Ministration of an Angel or Angels, we that are come to the heavenly *Jerusalem*, or enjoy the Christian Doctrine, are also come to an innumerable Company of Angels, who are all under the Direction of the ascended Jesus, even he who is invested with all Power, that he might be Head of all Things to the Church; for in that he himself hath suffered, being tempted, he is able also to succour them that are tempted: Now, if this be allowed to be a Truth, then we may plainly perceive, that particular and special Aids may be rationally prayed for and expected.

S E C T. IX.

ANOTHER Argument in Confirmation of the Prevalence of Prayer, and as a very great Encouragement to Christians, is, that we should offer up our Prayers in the Name of Christ, as his Disciples, called by the Author to the *Hebrews*, Ch. x. 20. *The new and living Way*, which he hath consecrated. By him therefore, saith the Apostle, *let us offer the Sacrifice of Praise, even the Fruit of our Lips, giving Thanks to his Name;* *Heb. xiii. 15:* *For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and Man, the Man Christ Jesus,* *1 Tim. ii. 5.* *One high Priest of our Profession, who, because he continueth for ever, hath an unchangeable Priesthood,*

hood, Heb. vii. 24. *We are made accepted in the beloved,* Eph. i. 6. Our Saviour, when he was about to leave his Disciples, left this Assurance for their Comfort; *Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my Name, he will give it you. Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my Name.*

Ask, and ye shall receive, that your Joy may be full, John xvi. 23. This Command of our Saviour is somewhat differently understood, by some it is thought to signify that we are to ask the Blessings that we need, absolutely *for the Sake of*; resting in, or depending on the imputed Merits of Christ, as the only, or alone Means and Foundation of our Acceptance. But this is not fairly implied in the Words, for we may and ought to ask the Blessings we need, as his Creatures; his derived, dependent, and accountable Creatures: And it is the Honour, the Duty, and the Privilege of Christians in particular, to have a farther Means, another Argument to urge for their Acceptance; and this, as it is the Command of God, is no less apparently founded in infinite Wisdom. For as *Jesus Christ* the only-begotten Son of God, came from the Father, and in all Things acted by the Command, Authority, and Power derived to him from the Father; and for his perfect Obedience was declared to be his beloved Son, in whom he was well pleased; who, in conformity to the divine Will, promulged the Doctrines and Precepts we call the Christian Religion, and did every thing fit and necessary for the Confirmation of his Mission and Doctrine in the World, and to erect his Kingdom amongst the Sons of Men; so it is the Command of God, that they thus believe in his Son *Jesus Christ*; that they own his Authority, and become his Disciples; and as such he will favour them with peculiar Marks of Approbation, he will in an essential Manner regard their Prayers, and look on them as in a nearer Relation, and will also dignify his own Son, by the Acceptance of him as Mediator between himself and his Creatures. Therefore, saith the Apostle, *in whom we have Boldness, and Access with Confidence, by the Faith of him,*

him, Ephes. iii. 12. This, therefore, is an Injunction peculiar to the Christian Dispensation, and belongs to none but such as believe Jesus to be the Son, and sent of God. And it is very observable, that our Lord did not enjoin this upon his Disciples, till after they had been instructed and established in the Faith and Doctrines of the Gospel, which implies that Faith in the Messiah was previously necessary on their Part. *Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my Name; ask, and ye shall receive.* And hence Christ is represented as the *Angel of the Covenant, having a golden Censer, and much Incense given unto him, that he should offer it with the Prayers of all Saints upon the golden Altar, Rev. viii. 3.* Having therefore a merciful and compassionate High-Priest; if we are the Disciples of Jesus Christ united to him by Faith, *We may draw nigh to God with full Assurance of Faith, Heb. x. 22. And come boldly to the Throne of his Grace, that we may obtain Mercy, and find Grace to help us in Time of Need, Heb. iv. 16.* Our Saviour's Prayer for his Disciples seems very consistent herewith. *And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own Self, with the Glory which I had with thee before the World was. I have manifested thy Name unto the Men, which thou gavest me out of the World. Thine they were, and thou gavest them me, and they have kept thy Word. For I have given unto them the Words which thou gavest me, and they have received them; and have known surely that I came out from thee; and they have believed that thou didst send me. I pray for them, John xvii. 5—10.* Indeed the Whole of the Chapter is of the same import, a Declaration of their being his Disciples, dedicated and set a-part to his Service (as every true Christian is) and therefore recommended to the merciful Regard of their God and his God. And as he prays not only for their Unity and Sanctification, but their Glorification also, and not only for those present, but for all that should hereafter believe on him; it is a natural Inference, that this Prayer could neither be designed to affect himself,

self, to render him the meet Subject; nor could his Prayer affect those who had not as yet existed: And therefore this Prayer must be intended to affect and influence the Deity.

Furthermore, the Practice of the Apostles in this Case deserves to be particularly considered; they were in an essential Manner acquainted with our Saviour's Piety and Devotion, some of them being his Cotemporaries, others by special Favour called and commissioned his Ministers; these could not reasonably be supposed to be ignorant of the Motives of his Prayer, nor the just and rational Views with which Prayer was to be offered up to God; their Example and Injunction must therefore be of great Weight in this Point. Under all the Exigencies of their Lives, we find Prayer was the Expedient they had Recourse to, either for themselves, or in Behalf of others; and indeed their Injunctions to the Performance of this Duty are not only many, but very frequent, at the same Time in the most significant Language they assert the Efficacy or Prevalence of Prayer, and urge it as an unquestionable Motive to the Performance of it. Thus St. Paul, *Phil. v. 6. In every Thing by Prayer and Supplication with Thanksgiving, let your Requests be made known unto God.* And *1 Tim. xi. 1. I exhort that Prayer be made for all Men.* When Writing to the *Philippians*, Chap. i. 4. mentions his praying for them in every Prayer, making Request with Joy: And Verses 9 and 10, he informs us of the Subject of his Prayer, viz. *That their Love might abound yet more and more in Knowledge and in all Judgment. That they might approve Things that are excellent, that they may be sincere and without Offence, till the Day of Christ.* And Verses 18 and 19, after he had been speaking of his Tribulation, he says, *I rejoice—For I know that this shall turn to my Salvation thro' your Prayer, and the Supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ.* And it is testified of *Cornelius*, who was a just Man, and one that feared God, *Acts x. 31. That his Prayer was heard, and his Alms were had in Remembrance in the Sight*

of God. And in that well-known Passage of St. James, Ch. i. 5. *If any of you lack Wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all Men Liberally—But let him ask in Faith.* See also, Chap. v. 13, 14, 15, 16. *Is any among you afflicted, let him pray. Is any sick among you, let him call for the Elders of the Church, and let them pray over him—And the Prayer of Faith shall save the Sick, and the Lord shall raise him up—Pray one for another, that ye may be healed—The effectual fervent Prayer of a righteous Man availeth much.* I shall not attempt to paraphrase these Words, or to answer all the Objections that have been raised to this Passage, much less to enumerate Texts of the Examples of the Apostles Prayers, and the consequent Success of them; but it may be necessary to obviate one Objection before I conclude, which may be of general Use.

It is objected, that as the great and important Business of their Lives was the Propagation and Defence of the Gospel, so it must be consistent with the Wisdom and Goodness of God, to give them some peculiar Manifestation of his Favour, some extraordinary supernatural Communications for the Support of their Minds, for the Discharge of their Duty, and in Confirmation of their Mission; and that tho' this was also sometimes afforded as the Answer of Prayer to the Apostles, and some of the first Propagators of the Christian Religion; this by no Means renders it the reasonable Expectation of Christians in general, on common and ordinary Occasions.

But if this Objection be duly considered, and it be admitted, that these had peculiar Manifestations of the divine Favour in this Respect, for these important Purposes; it affords at the same Time a high Degree of Evidence, that those Declarations they made of the Nature of this Duty, of the Design and Ends of it, with Respect to Persons of like Passions, were delivered by divine Authority; and as such to be received and regarded in the Practice of the Duty: To suppose otherwise, would be a Reflection on the Wisdom and Goodness

Goodness of God, in the Dispensation of the Gospel, conveyed to us through their Hands.

But perhaps I shall be thought too prolix in the Discussion of this Part; my Excuse is, that I apprehend this Point has been either absolutely given up, or explained away by some of our present Divines, and unreasonably exploded and derided by our modern Deists.

I shall conclude the Whole in the Words of Dr. *Leechman*, in which that Gentleman speaks my Sentiments.

To sum up the whole Argument: "Since there is an inward Impulse prompting us to pray; since there are frequent Precepts of external Revelation commanding us to pray; and since it is the established Law of the righteous Government of God, over the intelligent World, that spiritual Blessings shall be bestowed on those only who humble themselves to pray for them; we may infer, that Prayer is so far from implying any just Reflection upon the perfect Wisdom and Goodness of the great Governor of all Things, that it is a just Compliance with that Constitution of Things which he hath appointed, and an harmonizing with the wise Order of his Providence, since Prayer is appointed by God to be the Means of producing, preserving, and increasing in us the best and worthiest Dispositions: To practice it, is nothing else but concurring with him in his great Design of establishing the Happiness of his Creation.

C H A P. III.

Of the peculiar Obligations to public Worship.

S E C T. I.

HAVING already insisted on the Obligations to Prayer in general, from its moral Tendency, and as a conditional Injunction for obtaining divine Favours; I shall now briefly take Notice of the Obligations peculiar to public Worship, Family Prayer, mental and secret Devotion.

That God ought to be worshipped, is so self-evident a Duty, that I shall be excused if I dispatch it in a few Words. It is a Dictate of natural Religion; the Heathens themselves, how much soever they erred in their Notions of God, conceived of those which they called Gods to be the Objects of Reverence and Worship; and sure we must have infinite Reason to worship the one true God. His unlimited Power, unspotted Purity, inflexible Justice, diffusive Goodness, and the rest of his divine Attributes, demand this Acknowledgment from us. He has an incontestable Right to us, and our Obedience, and may challenge all that our Minds can yield of Reverence, all that our Hearts can hold of Affection, all that our Tongues can utter of Praise, and all the Gratitude and Obedience we can possibly pay him: And *public Worship* has not only the Sanction of divine Authority, but likewise what all Nations unite to acknowledge to be their Duty, by their established Custom and Practice.

It was certainly one great End, if not the chief End of God, in appointing a Sabbath, or a Day of Rest, and for which it is continued in the Church, that Men might meet together, openly acknowledge God, pay Homage to him, and converse with him in the Solemnities of his Worship.

The Place of public Worship is by divine Appellation the *House of God*, Gen. xxviii. 22. the Place of his more immediate and special Presence; therefore it was a Precept early given to the *Jews*, that they should reverence his Sanctuary, Lev. xix. 30. Under the Mosaic Dispensation, it was distinguished and honoured with some peculiar Manifestations of the divine Presence and Glory; and on that Account there was a peculiar Reverence due to it. But tho' the external and ritual Pomp and Ceremonies of the Synagogue and Temple Worship, are superseded by that more spiritual Service required in the Gospel, John iv. 24. our Places of Worship are also equally sacred; God is still present in Christian Assemblies, and Places of public Worship

Worship under the Gospel : Places in which we professedly go to meet with God, and most solemnly to address him.

Where God is worshipped according to his own Institution and Appointment, where he still records his Name, and we have Reason to expect the Accomplishment of what he hath promised; that he will come to his Worshipers and bless them, *Exod. xx. 24.* and wherever two or three are gathered together in his Name, he will be in the Midst of them. There we may taste greater Measures of divine Grace, imbibe more Light, Life, Comfort and Joy, than we ordinarily feel.—When therefore we present ourselves there, and engage in the solemn Transactions of Religion, we should consider it as something great and important, and engage all the Powers and Faculties of the Mind in this sacred, this weighty Employ.

Again, by this public Worship we make the properest Expression of the Sense we have of our Dependence upon God: We take the most effectual Method not only to preserve that Sense on our own Minds, but to establish and promote it in others.

It is likewise a social as well as solemn Act of Religion, wherein we jointly agree to unite our common Supplications and Thanksgivings, and bespeak a mutual Affection, a tender Regard, a sympathetic Concern, and Endeavours suitable to these public united Wishes, to promote as far as in us lies, the Happiness of those who join with us in that Assembly, or make up that universal Church, of which Jesus Christ is the Head. As an Author somewhere expresses it.

Public Worship has a Tendency more effectually to improve the most extensive and social Virtues, by which the public Peace is preserved, and the general Welfare and Happiness of Mankind advanced; at which Seasons are represented in a fuller, more particular and clearer Light, the Glories of the divine Nature, the Harmony of the divine Perfections, and the stupendous and manifold Exertions of his Power,

Wisdom, Justice, Mercy and Truth, displayed in the Works of Creation and Providence.—In the Wisdom of our Frame, and the Laws of our Nature, in all the Dealings of Providence, and more especially in the Gospel of Jesus Christ, wherein the Wisdom and condescending Goodness of God are abundantly manifested in the Method of our Salvation.

Nor can I here omit to mention, that whilst we are uniting with our Fellow-Christians, we are also joining the universal Voice of Nature, and aspiring to an Imitation of the noble, exalted Employment of the heavenly Host, according to our Measure and Capacity in magnifying the supreme God and Father of all. — Very emphatical is the Description St. *John* gives us of the whole Universe joining in their several Capacities, to give Glory to their common Lord, *Rev. v. 13. Every Creature which is in Heaven and on Earth, and such as are in the Sea, and all that is in them, I heard, saying, Blessing, and Honour, and Glory, and Power be unto him that sitteth on the Throne.*

Since then public Worship is necessary to preserve the Belief and Acknowledgment of a God.—To dispose us in any Measure to render ourselves acceptable to him. — Necessary to the Peace, Order, Harmony, Welfare and Prosperity of Society—Necessary to Persons of every Rank, Character and Circumstance; it behoves every rational and accountable Creature to attend frequently, and to encourage as much as possible a due Regard to it in all others wherever his Authority or Influence may extend *.

* See Dr. *Samuel Clarke*, on this Subject, Vol. VII. Dean *Prideaux's* Connection, Vol. II. and the Rev. Mr. *Benjamin Bennett's* Christian Oratory, Page 460.

S E C T. II.

Of F A M I L Y P R A Y E R.

TH E Obligations to Family Prayer principally consist in the following Particulars, *viz.*

1st, From the State of Families, as all are dependent on the Providence of God, and often particular Wants may be the fit Subject of their Petitions, as well as peculiar Mercies the Matter of their Thanks.

2dly, The Relation there is betwixt the Members of a Family, render it fit and expedient that they should unite in their Devotions to God, on whom their mutual Happiness depend.

3dly, From the Injunctions in the Scripture to frequent Prayer.

4thly, From the Examples recorded of great and good Men, who are in this Respect, said to walk with God.

5thly, The Declaration of God's Acceptance and Approbation thereof; it was an honourable Testimony which God himself gives of the sincere Piety of *Abraham*, Gen. xviii. 19. *For I know him, that he will command his Children and his Household after him, and they shall keep the Way of the Lord, to do Justice and Judgment; that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him.*

How noble and truly great was the Resolution of *Joshua*, when in his pathetic Discourse to the *Israelites*, he declared, *That whatever their Choice was, as for me and my House we will serve the Lord*, Josh. xxiv. 15.

6thly, It is highly requisite that our Devotion should return at proper Seasons, for by long Intermission we become less disposed for those Exercises that may be of the greatest Advantage to our Virtue and Happiness; I will not presume to say what should be the precise Times of Prayer in a Family; Morning and Evening seems more immediately pointed out by the natural Succession of Day and Night. These furnish

Matter for Prayer and Praise, and have in all Ages been made Choice of, as proper Seasons of Devotion.

Considering the Motives to it, such as have Leisure should be more frequent, all at least should find some Intervals for the Discharge of this Duty.

Archbishop *Tillotson* says, the Worship of God in our Families is so necessary to keep alive and maintain a Sense of God and Religion in the Minds of Men, that where it is entirely neglected, I do not see how any Family can in Reason be esteemed a Family of Christians, or indeed, to have any Religion at all *.

But notwithstanding many allow it is a reasonable and good Practice, yet they live in the Neglect of it.—This Neglect they pretend to excuse themselves in, lest they should be thought too precise and singular—Others plead Inability to the Performance of it—Others Engagements in Business, and it is to be feared, that this may be attributed often to worse Causes, which reflect great Dishonour on Men as Masters of Families, Parents of Children, and Christians.—Hindrances of this Kind are the Want of exercising a due Authority and proper Influence over those under our Care.—The want of Union, Peace, Harmony and Agreement; and too often arises from a Difference of Sentiments, with respect to Religion, from whence proceed a Coldness and Discouragement, which is often difficult to support ourselves under, and more difficult to remove. How the well-disposed Christian can live in the Omission of it, I will not presume to determine †.

Where a Discouragement has arisen from the Want of Ability to pray *Ex tempore*, and of Readiness in Expression, to keep alive the Devotion, I readily grant, and I heartily recommend it to the Consideration of Persons in such Circumstances, that they use Forms now and then, at least, adapted to suit a Family.—

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* First Sermon on Family Religion.

† Rev. Mr. Morris's Sermons, Vol. II. Page 18.

It may likewise be occasionally expedient, when the Interruption and Discomposure of Business, or other Occurrences, have indisposed them for the Discharge of that Duty.—Lastly, the Use of a Form is very commendable, when to a Family, perhaps, of differing Sentiments, it would be most acceptable and edifying.

I shall only add, that however great the Difficulties and Discouragements may be to the Performance of this Duty, where a due Regard to the Authority of God, and to the natural Tendency of this Duty, animates the Soul with Resolution and Steadfastness superior to all these Discouragements, the greater must be the inward Satisfaction of his Mind, and the more solid and uninterrupted his Hopes of divine Favour.

S E C T. III.

Of secret and mental DEVOTION.

TH E Obligations to secret Prayer arise, 1st, From the Reasons of Prayer in general, which is the Relation between God as Creator, and us as Creatures dependent on him. Every one should pray by himself, because he is conscious of his absolute Dependence on him—Has many particular Blessings to ask—Many Sins of his own to confess, and many peculiar Favours to acknowledge.

2dly From sundry Precepts in the Scriptures concerning Prayer, all which principally relate to, or at least most manifestly include, the Practice of this Duty in our Closets.

3dly, From the Practice of truly pious and devout Men in all Ages, especially of Jesus Christ, our great Pattern and Exemplar, as well as our alone Mediator and Intercessor.

4thly, Secret Prayer is with more Ease adapted to the State and Circumstances of particular Persons: Each Person may suit his Prayers to the Dispensation of Providence

Providence he is under, to the Condition of his temporal and spiritual Affairs, and to the Abilities and Disposition of his Mind.

5thly, Secret Prayer is best adapted to improve us in the Language of Prayer. At these Seasons, the Mind being under less Restraint, it learns a greater Ease and Freedom of Expression, and is thereby rendered better capable of performing this Duty in Public; which is one Part wherein the Gift of Prayer consists—It likewise tends to improve the Disposition to religious Duties, and gives a pleasing Taste and Relish for rational and mental Pleasures, and by Degrees, not only renders the Performance easy, but agreeable.

6thly, The secular Employments and Business of Life, may often divert us from, and oftener indispose us for public Worship; but no Business can prevent a well-disposed Mind from mental Devotions: His Contemplations on the Principles of Religion, of his respective Duties, and on the various Motives and Obligations to their Performance, will improve the pious Disposition, and naturally produce frequent and suitable Ejaculations and Thanksgivings.

7thly, Secret and mental Devotion is peculiarly adapted to prepare us for an Attendance on public Worship, as it is an Abstraction of the Mind from worldly and sensual Gratifications, calling in our Thoughts, and fixing our Attention to Things of a divine and spiritual Nature, from whence the Mind is reduced to a calm, serious, and devout Temper, suitable to public Worship.

8thly, Prayer in Secret, implies such a lively Exercise of Faith in the Perfections of God, particularly his Omnipresence, and Omniscience, as thereby to give him the Honour of those divine Attributes, in a more special Manner than in public Worship--We hereby acknowledge that he seeth in Secret—We own his Providence, not only in general, but in particular that he takes Care of Individuals—We can then refer ourselves to his Care, seek an Interest in his Favour, and

in a peculiar Manner dedicate ourselves to him ; and in all the Parts of this Duty, when performed in Secret, there is the greatest Proof of our Sincerity.

9thly, Private Devotion has the most apparent Tendency to maintain the Life and Power of Religion, as it serves to fix and establish in our Minds an habitual Seriousness and Reverence of the divine Perfections and Providence, as it exalts and elevates the Mind above an inordinate Fondness for the transient unsatisfying Pleasures of Sense, and to derive from God all that Assistance which is necessary to fortify us against Temptation, and excite us to our Duty.

10thly, Secret Prayer will enable us to form the best Judgment of our spiritual State: Among the many Marks that are given for the Trial of Uprightness, there is scarce any one more sure and undeceiving than constant Application to the unseen Parts of Religion—To delight in God, and draw nigh to him in Secret, and to act consistent therewith, will assure our Hearts, so that we shall not be ashamed before our Judge at his coming.

11thly, Secret Prayer is the truest Source of inward Comfort, Happiness, and Joy; the Disposition with which we retire from every other Engagement, implies a Consciousness of our being under the Care, Direction, and Blessing of Providence ; and whatever Misgivings of Mind we may have in the Sense of Imperfection and Guilt, whatever Dissatisfaction from an Experience of our Frailty and Failings, Prayer tends to disburthen the Mind, and to lay it open to the most pious Impressions, and is productive of the most rational Joy and Pleasure.

12thly, It hath a peculiar Promise made to it, that our Father, who seeth in Secret, will reward us openly, by his Providence interposing in our Affairs, and leading us as it were by the Hand, in Ways of Peace and Safety, and by the Comforts and Consolations of his Spirit, whilst here, and will hereafter crown with distinguished Marks of his Favour, in the Presence of the

the holy Angels and innumerable Company of glorified Spirits, those who were his faithful, sincere Worshipers on Earth. Each of these Particulars might be easily and usefully enlarged on; but as the Ideas hereby suggested, are natural, so I persuade myself, they will in some Measure approve themselves to the Reason and Consciousness of most Christians; and if they in any Measure tend to encourage the practical Use of it, I doubt not their Truth will be abundantly evinced, and be followed with proportionable Pleasure and Satisfaction of Mind.

C H A P. IV.

On the comparative Excellency, or peculiar Advantages and Expediency of precomposed Forms of Prayer, and such as are termed ex-tempore Prayers.

S E C T. I.

NOtwithstanding 'tis a truly noble and Christian Wish, to see all the different Denominations of Christians united by one Catholic Spirit, in the Worship of God the Father, thro' *Jesus Christ*, in one and the same solemn Assembly; such are the different Ideas of Christians, with respect to the Lawfulness and Expediency of addressing the supreme Being by precomposed Forms of Prayer, or by what are generally termed *ex-tempore* Prayers; that it is the principal, if not the only Difference that distinguishes some Denominations of Christians. And tho' entirely to remove the Prejudices of Men to one or the other, thro' long Habit and Prepossession, must needs be a vain and fruitless Attempt; yet an impartial Representation of the peculiar Advantages and Expediency of each, may probably tend to lessen the Prejudices of Christians in this particular, and give them more favourable Sentiments of such as think and practice different from them.

With

With respect to the Terms I have made use of, what is intended by a Form, needs no Explication: But with respect to the latter, I would observe, that tho' the proper Signification of the Word *Ex-tempore*, is speaking without Premeditation, suddenly, freely, &c. This is only a vulgar, or mistaken Notion of that Prayer, which is pleaded for, or practised by the Dissenters, as opposed to precise established Forms. By *ex-tempore* Prayer then, I would be understood to mean, not raw and undigested Matter, but such as is the Effect of Premeditation, sometimes assisted by the Spirit of God, whereby the Mind is prepared and put into a devotional Frame, and the Memory awakened to furnish or indite Language, pertinent and suitable to express the same; though not reduced to any limited precise Form.

In this view of it, I shall take some Notice of what are the principal Arguments in favour of each.

1st, The Advocates for precomposed Forms, plead long Prescription for the Use of them; and they argue with much Reason thus, that what we address to God ought to be duly considered. That we ought to serve God with our best: And when we have such plain suitable and pathetic Prayers made to our Hands, why should we offer up such lean, raw Sacrifices, as our own Thoughts on a sudden can furnish us with?—Besides, is Invention the principal Talent we are called upon to exercise in Prayer? Should not our Faith, Hope, Love, &c. be in lively Exercise? And are not these Graces under some kind of Check and Restraint, while we are striving to express ourselves in a proper Manner?

On the other Hand, 'tis the Opinion of Protestant Dissenters, that Prayer is properly the Expression of our own Sense of divine Things; that a Man of common Capacity is able to express his own Sins and Sorrows, his own Hopes and Fears, his own Faith and Desires, in such Language as God understands, and will accept of.—That the Use of set Forms has a great Tendency

to

to introduce Coldness and Formality into divine Worship—That no Man is called by Providence to pray in the Presence of others; but such a one as is furnished with Knowledge and Language to perform it in a proper and becoming Manner—That a devout Christian is restrained and limited by the Words of any Form, so as not to give himself the Liberty of expressing his own devout Breathings towards God, whatever holy Elevation of Soul he may feel within himself.—That this appears to carry with it a Resistance of the good Motions of the holy Spirit, whose Assistance is promised, and doubtless may be rationally hoped for in this Duty *.

More particularly with respect to the Lawfulness and Expedience of introducing *Forms of Prayer* into public Worship. This I shall consider under the three following Particulars.

1st, I shall endeavour to shew what Authority is contained in, or fairly deducible from Scripture, in favour of prescribed Forms.

2dly, I shall enquire into the Sanction it receives from Antiquity. And,

3dly, Whether set Forms of Prayer are more expedient on Principles of Reason.

To each of these Particulars, I shall oppose what is generally urged in answer to them; and conclude with some Remarks on the Utility and Expediency of Forms, under particular Circumstances, Occasions, &c.

In Regard to the first of these, *viz.* Scripture Authority for the Use of Forms, a late Author † has quoted some Passages in Favour of it. The first, which I think deserves my Notice, is Page 162; where he says, “*David*, by Inspiration from God, appointed the Book of Psalms for public Service; for so in the Titles we find several of them particularly recommended

* *Watt's Miscellany*, Page 202. † *Collection of Cases and Discourses*, Vol. II.

mended to the Choirs of the Priests and Levites, for Part of their vocal Service—Some to the Sons of *Korab*, others to *Asaph*, others to *Jeduthun*, and a great many to the Master of Music; and tho' others have no Title at all, as particularly the 96, and 105. Yet 1 *Chron.* xvi. 7. we find, that they were delivered by *David* into the Hands of *Asaph* and his Brethren, for Forms of Praise and Thanksgiving to God: And accordingly, 2 *Chron.* xxix. 30. we are told, that *Hezekiah* the King commanded the *Levites* to sing Praise unto the Lord, with the Words of *David*, and of *Asaph* the *Seer*."

In answer to which, it may be observed,

1st, That our Author here takes it for granted, because *David* recommended some of his Psalms to be introduced occasionally into public Worship, that therefore he was inspired by God for that Purpose.—Had this been the Case, I suppose he would have been conscious of it; and it was the Duty of *David* to have delivered them to the People, under that Sanction, and it was reasonable to suppose he would not have omitted it—Yet he gives us no Intimation of any such Inspiration.

2dly, Tho' the subject Matter of *David's* Psalms are in some Places expressive of his great Humility and Devotion of Heart, yet there are many of them adapted to the particular Circumstances, and peculiar Sentiments of the *Jews*—Some of them plainly confined and limited to his own particular Case—Others favour of Partiality, an uncharitable and unforgiving Temper, with Imprecations on his, or the Church's Enemies. That, in short, they appear to be the Result of natural Dispositions, under the Influence of external Circumstances.

3dly, For these Reasons, I apprehend the Psalms of *David* are not altogether adapted to public Worship, nor in general recommended and introduced into the common daily Service of the Tabernacle: And how much soever *David*, *Hezekiah*, or others, might be fond of some of those Compositions

positions set to Music, they are destitute of divine Authority, for being a Part of the *Jewish* Worship.

The second Instance brought to prove the divine Authority of Liturgies, is that *Ezra*, and the Elders of the Synagogue, composed eighteen Benedictions at the laying the Foundation of the second Temple, which were enjoined by them to constitute a Part of the public Worship in the Synagogue. This was about 530 Years before Christ *.

The learned *Selden* has largely attempted to prove, that the *Jews* had no Forms of Prayer before *Ezra's* Time, and that this was consequently the first instituted Liturgy †.

Dean *Prideaux*, speaking of the Synagogue Service, says, “ For their Service they have Liturgies, and these at first were very few; but since they increased to a very large Bulk, which makes their Synagogue Service very long and tedious; and which, with other Rites and ceremonious Observances, equal, if not exceed, both the Superstition and Length of the popish Service §. — He adds, that the most solemn Part of their public Prayers, are those which they call *Shamoneh Eshreh*, i.e. the eighteen Prayers composed and instituted by *Ezra*, and the great Synagogue.

Philo, speaking of these Prayers, says, they were enjoined to be repeated by all Persons of Age, either publicly in the Synagogue, or in private, three Times every Day. Besides these, they had several other Prayers, some going before, and others interspersed between them, and others following after, which rendered their Synagogue Service very long ‡.

If we take a View of the subject Matter of these eighteen Prayers and Benedictions, we shall find they were adapted to the peculiar Circumstances of the
Jews

* *Scaliger*. † *Selden*, In Eutichii Alex. and Orig. Pag. 43, 44. § *Prideaux's* Connection, Vol. II. Book VI. where the Reader may see the Benedictions at large. ‡ *Philo* de Vita Contemplativa, Page 689.

Jews—Their Fondness of their patriarchal Descent—
 Their boasted Privileges—Their popular Prejudices,
&c. Repugnant to our most noble Ideas of God,
 as the universal Parent and Friend of Mankind; so
 that they have no internal, real, and proper Evidence
 of their divine Original. 'Tis moreover very certain,
 that the *Jews* were very prone to deviate from the
 Law and Command of God, and to adhere to Inventions
 of their own; for which Reason *Jeremiah* cautions them,
not to make use of Babylonian Materials for a Corner or
Foundation Stone, Jer. li. 26. and reminds them of the
 Command given them by *Moses*, whom they acknow-
 ledged a divine Prophet; *To take Heed to themselves, that*
they were not ensnared. And that with respect to divine
 Worship; *They should not enquire how did these Nations*
serve their God, even so will we do likewise. *Ye are com-*
manded not to do so; but that whatsoever God commands,
that ye are to observe and do; not adding thereto, nor dimi-
nishing therefrom, Deut. xii. 30. But tho' the Com-
 position and Introduction of these Prayers be admitted
 to be as ancient as the Names they bear, it will be far-
 ther evident they can claim no superior Authority.
 If we add to this, that *Rabbi Gamaliel*, a little before
 the Destruction of *Jerusalem*, added the nineteenth Be-
 nediction, as it is called, tho' very improperly, and
 is placed as the Twelfth, according to the Order in
 which they stand; and the Dean acknowledges, was
 composed as an Imprecation against the Christians,
viz. "Let there be no Hope to them who apostatise
 from the true Religion; and let Heretics, how many
 soever they be, all perish as in a Moment, and let the
 Kingdom of Pride be immediately rooted out and broken
 in our Days. Blessed art thou, O Lord, our God,
 who destroyest the Wicked, and bringest down the
 Proud—The Inference is natural and conclusive, that
 what so apparently tended to oppose the Spirit, and Pro-
 mulgation of the Gospel, could not have the Sanction
 of divine Authority."

From hence I will likewise infer, that notwithstanding the *Jews* were indulged in their Formulary of Prayer or Liturgy, without any immediate Prohibition of their Use; yet they can only be considered on the Footing of those many other Rites and Ceremonies which belonged to the *Jews*; which were in their own Nature temporary, and intended by Providence to be set aside, and superseded by a more spiritual, and consequently a more acceptable Service; of which the Destruction of the City of *Jerusalem*, and its Temple, would be a Proof—To which I may add, this was wisely intended in the Oeconomy of the divine Providence, to convince them of their Prejudices, and to shew them, that the *Gentiles* should have an equal Share of Privileges with them, both with respect to obtaining the Favour of God, and eternal Happiness; and this is evidently confirmed by that Passage, *John* iv. 23. *The Time cometh, and now is, when the true Worshippers shall not worship in this Mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem; but the true Worshippers shall worship the Father in Spirit and in Truth.* I say, this Passage plainly refers to the *Jewish* ceremonial Worship; which was to give Place to that pure and spiritual Worship recommended in the Gospel. But we don't find any Forms of Prayer prescribed and enjoined by *Jesus Christ* for that Purpose, notwithstanding that spiritual Worship was to be the Worship of Christians, wherever the Knowledge and Influence of the Gospel extended.

But what is mentioned as the most positive Injunction of Scripture to Christians, for the Use of Set Forms of Prayer, is the Lord's Prayer, *Luke* xi. 2. Where our Lord enjoins his Disciples, when they prayed, to say, *our Father, &c.*

To which it is replied, that even in this Scripture, *Christ* cannot be supposed to have appointed this as a Set Form of Prayer in these prescript Words only; for then the Apostles must have been guilty of transgressing a Command of *Christ*, in making use of other
Language

Language in their Prayers; and likewise the Church of England, in forming so many Collects and Prayers: But the plain Design of our Lord was, to deliver this as a Pattern, or Directory for Prayer, as it is expressed by St. *Matthew*, Ch. vi. after this manner, pray ye, *to this Purpose*. *Christ* no more intended to tie this Disciple, who desired to be instructed how to pray, to this Form of Words, or any other, Disciple, than he did the twelve Disciples, when he sent them out to preach, with this Word of Command, *Matt. x. 7.* Preach, saying, *The Kingdom of Heaven is at Hand*; that they should thereby be tied to those very Words in their preaching, and preach nothing else. But as this was given as a Text or Theme to preach on; in like manner was this a Rule to pray by. The Disciple, who proposes the Question, Ver. 1. desires that they might be taught to pray, as *John* taught his Disciples; but such a set Form we find not, that *John* in his Teachings gave to his Disciples: Neither do we find, that any of *Christ's* Disciples, or Apostles, did use this very Prayer, to which our Expositors agree *.

Grotius, on *Luke xi. 2.* saith, that *Christ* herein teacheth us a Compendium of those Things we are to pray for: At that Time they were not bound to the Use of so many Words and Syllables; as also *Tertullian*, *Cyprian*, *Musculus*, *Cornelius* †, *A Lapide*, and *Austin* himself, saith, *Liberum est*, it is free for us to ask the same Thing in the Lord's Prayer; *Aliis atque, Aliis verbis*, Sometimes one way, and sometimes another †.

Justin Martyr saith, the Minister, or he that instructeth the People, prayed according to his Ability ||.

Tertullian saith, they prayed *sine Monitore*, without a Monitor, or any other common Prayer Book, but their own Hearts §.

* *Delaune's*, Plea. † *Grotius*. ‡ *Delaune*. || *Just. Martyr per Smer*, Pag. 5. § *Tertul. Apol. Ch. 9.*

Socrates tells us, among all the Christians of that Age, scarce two made use of the same Words in Prayer.

Chrysostom saith, with other Gifts, they had the Gift of Prayer, which was also called the Spirit of Prayer; and he who had this Gift prayed for the whole Multitude, for what was expedient unto the Church, and also instructed others to pray*.

And tho' it cannot be supposed, that *Christ* or his Apostles would leave the Churches without necessary Instruction how to perform this Duty, so often and so earnestly recommended; yet we no where find any Forms or Liturgies instituted by them, nor appointed by others, in Pursuance of any Trust reposed in them for that Purpose †.

And as an ingenious Gentleman expresses himself; "had our Lord intended his Disciples should be wholly confined to Forms in public Worship, he would in all Probability have given us more large and particular Instructions concerning this Affair ||.

'Tis evident, that the Praying recommended by them, was praying in the Spirit, and praising in the Spirit; and that God, being a Spirit, seeketh and accepteth such Worshipers. *St. Paul* made this his Rule; I will, says he, *pray with the Spirit, and I will pray with the Understanding also*, 1 Cor. xiv. 15. And as every Man hath received the Gift, so let him minister the same to others, 1 Pet. iv. 10, 11. If any man speak, let him speak as of the Oracles of God; If any minister, let him do it as of the Ability which God giveth. And *St. Paul* tells us expressly, *He knew not what to pray for as he ought, but as the Spirit gave him Utterance*, Rom. viii. 26. But he certainly knew what to pray for, if the Lord's Prayer, or any other prescribed Form only, was to have been made use of by him. It naturally follows, that these Rules are of perpetual Obligation to the Christian Church,

* *Delaune* • • *ibid.* † *Calvin's Institutes*, Pag. 27. || *Mr. West on Prayer*, Pag. 5.

Church, or else it must be incumbent on the Objectors, to shew when they ceased to be so.

It is objected, that the Gift itself is ceased, or that the Spirit does not assist in that extraordinary Manner, as was evident in Time of the Apostles. To this I answer;

1st, If by extraordinary, is meant the miraculous Gifts, either instantaneous, as was the Gift of Tongues, or such supernatural Communications of Power, as to enable them to perform Miracles, for the Confirmation of their Mission. This we don't find to extend beyond the Apostles, and first Propagators of the Gospel. But,

2dly, The extraordinary Effusion of the Spirit, does not appear to be communicated for the Performance of this Duty, even in the Time of the Apostles, the Gift of Prayer was never mentioned among the extraordinary Gifts, *Acts ii.* was not an Assistance to supercede the Use of their natural Abilities—Not an Assistance to render them careless and inconsiderate, but was only an Aid to their Endeavours in the Use of proper Helps, for the right Discharge of this Duty. Hence the Exhortation to watch unto Prayer, *1 Pet. iv. 5. Give Attendance to Reading—Neglect not the Gift that is in thee:—Meditate upon these Things;—give thyself wholly to them, that thy Profitting may appear, 1 Tim. iv. 13, 14, 15. Stir up the Gift of God, which is in thee, 2 Tim. i. 6.* Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a Workman that needs not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth; so that both with respect to Prayer and Preaching, even those first Ministers of the Gospel who had tasted of the heavenly Gift, and had by that been in some Measure qualified and called to minister, were to apply themselves to the Use of their natural Abilities, and proper Help, for the better Discharge of this Duty; and that tho' there was some Diversity and Degrees of Gifts, whereby they were more disposed, and better qualified, for some particular Offices, they were such as they might neglect or improve. This appears every

way consistent with the Nature of their Duty, with the Dignity of human Nature, and the Promise of divine Assistance, for the Encouragement of Christians. And whoever has read and considered the apostolical Writings, must acknowledge, that the Assistance of God's holy Spirit is there promised to such Christians in all succeeding Ages, who may stand in need of them, for the Discharge of their Duty; or, according to the Apostle's Phrase, in every Time of Need. I may add too, that this is the Expectation and Encouragement of Christians at this Day, notwithstanding this is a Doctrine so much exploded by some Sceptics; nay, I may say, the Experience and self-conscious Happiness of some, who possess a greater Degree of Modesty than Enthusiasm—I have been somewhat larger on this Particular, that it might be clearly seen what kind of Assistance those Christians plead for, who assert, that neither *Christ* nor his Apostles ever instituted set Forms of Prayer—That they never delegated to any of their Successors a Power of doing it; and esteem it unlawful, to comply with those human Institutions. I shall conclude this Part, with an Address to the Protestant Christians. You know it is an Article of our established Church, that whatever is not read in Scripture, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any Man, that it should be believed as an Article of Faith, or be thought requisite to Salvation*.

In like Manner Bishop *Hoadly* expresses himself; “*Christ* is King in his own Kingdom; he is sole Lawgiver to his Subjects; their Faith was once delivered by him; the Conditions of their Happiness were once laid down by him. The Nature of God's Worship was once declared by him.—If *Christ* be our King, let us shew ourselves Subjects to him alone, in the great Affair of Conscience and eternal Salvation†.

To the same Purpose, the memorable Mr. *Chillingworth*. “That wherein all Protestants Confession agree, and which they all subscribe as a perfect Rule

* Article VI. † Nature of the Kingdom and Church of *Christ*, Page 30.

of their Faith and Actions is the Bible. The Bible, I say, the Bible only is the Religion of Protestants,—no Tradition, but that of Scripture can derive itself from the Fountain. This, therefore, and this only I have Reason to believe, as the Word of God—to endeavour to find the true Sense of it, and to live according to it *.

Dr. *Fulk* treating on the Subject before us says, on 1 *Cor.* xiv. 14, 15. Being assured by the sacred Scriptures, and the Consent of ancient and modern Writers, that no such Formularies as are now imposed or in use, had any Being in the primitive Churches; we cannot but think it unsafe to subject ourselves to the Use of them. Compare *Levit.* xxvii. 9, 10. *Isai.* xxiv. 5, with 1 *Cor.* xi. 2. and *Gal.* iii. 15.

To which I may add Dr. *Middleton's* Assertion, that Protestantism rests on the solid Foundation of the sacred Scriptures, unmixed with the Rubbish of ancient Tradition or ancient Fathers, and independent on the Characters and Writings of any Men, except *Moses* and the Prophets, Jesus Christ and his Apostles †.

I shall conclude this Part in the Words of a Gentleman unknown; “Protestantism implies, an inviolable Regard to the supreme and sole Authority of the Scriptures in Matters of Religion, a constant Adherence to the Rights of private Judgment, and a conscientious Acknowledgment of the Sufficiency of the Revelation of Jesus, without any human Inventions, national Establishments or private Impositions.” But,

Secondly, I am to consider how far Antiquity may give Sanction to the Use of Forms of Prayer, and I shall therefore first enquire, and attempt to ascertain the Antiquity of this Practice; and secondly, consider the Validity of it in respect to Forms of Prayer. In my former Section I have admitted the Introduction of Forms of Prayer and Praise into the Synagogue Worship,

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* Protestants no Hereticks.

† Dr. *Middleton's* Miscellaneous Works, Vol. I. P. 119.

ship, and that there were eighteen Benedictions composed by *Ezra*; and the Elders with him, which constituted a Part of their stated Worship, upon the *Jews* Return from the *Babylonian* Captivity after the Building of the second Temple, in the Reign of *Cyrus I.* about 525 Years before Christ *; and as this is the most ancient, so this is one of the principal Arguments offered by the Christians for the Use of Forms at this Time.

But 'tis remarkable, that Mr. *Broughton* tells us, that Liturgies, or pre-composed set Forms of Prayer, have at all Times and all Places been used in the Christian Churches. — And yet immediately after he adds, “When the extraordinary Gifts of the Holy Ghost ceased, the Rulers of the Church supplied this Want by proper Forms of their own Composition, according to Christian Prudence and Discretion: This seems to be the true Original of Liturgies †.

But if Forms of Prayer for public Worship were always in use, there could be no Time when they were (and that too occasionally) introduced. And if the Apostles were never miraculously inspired, or supernaturally and specially gifted for the Performance of this Duty (as I have before shewn) but the Assistances they enjoyed were such as is common to Christians: Then the Cessation of these Gifts cannot be a Reason or Cause for the Introduction of Forms. Had they prescribed Forms to other Christian Churches, they ought in such Cases to have given Credentials of their Authority; but we don't find any Attempts of this kind, or that they constituted any of their Successors to do it.—Yet, says our Author, every Bishop composed Forms of Prayer for his own Church, and each particular Church or Diocese had its proper Liturgy §.—In after Times they agreed by Consent to conform their

† *Scaliger*, quoted by *Bobun*. † Article Liturgy, Vol. II. Pag. 23, quotes *Bingham's* Orig. Eccles. B. 13. Ch. 5.
§ *Broughton's* Dictionary, *ibid.* where he quotes *Bingham's* Orig. Eccles. B. IV. Ch. 3.

their Liturgy to the Model of the metropolitical Church, to which they belonged ; and then it was enacted into a Law by several Counsels, that the same Order and Uniformity should be observed in all Churches. The Rudiments of this Discipline were first laid in the *French Churches* *.

Soon after the same Rule was concerted and agreed upon in the *Spanish Churches* ; and when the *Roman Empire* began to be divided into different Kingdoms, which was about the ninth Century, then came in the Use of national Liturgies †.

Our Author adds, that none of the ancient Liturgies are now extant, as they were at first composed for the Use of particular Churches, which generally terminated on the Succession of another Bishop. For as a *French Author* acknowledges, “ The ancient Liturgies were for some Ages only certain Forms of Worship committed to Memory ‡, and were known by Practice rather than by Writing. This seems the more probable, as in sundry Persecutions, when Search was made after every Thing belonging to the Church, we never read of any ritual Book or Books of divine Service discovered amongst them.

Indeed, a Variety of Liturgies have taken Place in different Periods of Time under the Sanction of real or fictitious Names. — *Dupin* § acknowledges, that some of them have been falsely ascribed to the Apostles, as *St. Peter*, *St. Matthew*, *St. Mark*, *St. James*, &c. But nothing was ever a more manifest Forgery, since they contain Prayers to the Virgin *Mary* as Mother of God, to the twelve Apostles and many other Errors which had not crept into the Christian Church for several Centuries after the Apostles,

* *Broughton's Dictionary*, Article Liturgy.

† *Ibid.* Quotes *Conc. Tolet*, Ch. 2.

‡ *Renaudot. Collect. Liturg. Orient. Dissert. I.*

§ See *Broughton's Dict.* before cited, who quotes *Dupin's History*, Eccles. Cent. I.

Apostles, and it would be morally impossible for any Person to ascertain the pretended Antiquity of the most common Liturgies in the *Romish* Church.—We may add, with respect to the Use of that prescribed Form called the Lord's Prayer; it was never by Consent of the Fathers, or Decree of Councils, introduced into the stated Service of the Church till the Council of *Toledo*, Anno 618, in the 9th Canon*. And if this was not generally admitted and constituted a Part of their public Worship, which had just Claim to the highest Regard; how much less could they adopt Forms of merely human Composition, regard them as sacred, and impose them on Christian Societies as Part of their stated public Worship: Yet this we may without Breach of Charity say, has been a Custom in *England*, as well as at *Rome*, amongst Protestants as well as Papists, without Regard to the Authority of God, or the Rights of Conscience, tho' they have nothing but long Prescription to urge in Vindication of it. I am next to consider the Validity and Force of Antiquity, to evince the Lawfulness and Expediency of Forms.

To this may be answered, that bare Antiquity is no certain Evidence of Truth, because there are many Errors which can boast of Antiquity earlier than Christianity itself. Thus Judaism, which is now mere Superstition, was older than the Gospel, and Idolatry older than both.

And with respect to the Christian Church, we know that there were Errors introduced into it even in the apostolical Age, which can never change their Nature, or be transformed into Truth, because of their Plea of Antiquity; for Instance, the Worshipping of Angels was introduced during the Ministry of *St. Paul* himself, and yet it must be allowed to be Superstition and Idolatry †.

If Antiquity could give Sanction to human Inventions in the Doctrine, Discipline, or Worship of the Christian

* *Dalaun's* Plea, Page 60.

† *Dr. Chandler's* Notes of the Church, Page 20.

tian Church, Transubstantiation would stand a good Chance, which was established as an Article of Faith in the Lateran Council under Pope *Innocent*, Anno 1215. Auricular Confession at the same Time, and the giving the Sacrament to Infants, was introduced as early as the second or third Century, some hundred of Years before the Institution of a Christian Liturgy. Pope *Gregory I.* who rose to that Dignity, A. D. 590; Part of whose Character is, that he preferred human Ordinances to the divine Law *, compiled the new Form of Service, which they called the *Mass*, and added many Ceremonies that were never in use before; so that *Platina* said, the whole Institution of the *Mass* was invented by him, and we in *England* had ours from *Gregory*, who by his Minister *Austin* first founded the Church, and introduced all the Litany and most of the other Rites, Service and Ceremonies of the Church †.

When, in order to free the Christian Church from the Innovations and unscriptural Ceremonies that had crept into it, a Reformation commenced, under that remarkable Instrument of the divine Providence, *Martyn Luther*, (at *Augsburg*, 1529;) and afterwards was carried on by that learned and zealous Reformer *John Calvin*, (at *Geneva*, 1536.) restoring the primitive Method of Prayer, was one principal Part.

Animated by a Regard to Truth, and encouraged by their Example when the Reformation took Place in *England*, this was by a considerable Body of Christians deemed a most necessary Part; and though the Government in Church and State saw fit to establish a Liturgy, many learned, episcopal Bishops, and Divines, objected to the established Form of divine Service, on Account that there still remained Innovations in it. "They made thirty-five Exceptions against the Liturgy, and amongst others the corrupt Translation of the Epistles and Gospels, and Psalms; they excepted against Singing of Prayers, against adding the

* *Walch's History of the Popes*, Page 81.

† *De laun's Plea*, Page 41.

the *Gloria Patria* to these Psalms, against the Hymns taken out of the Mass Book, viz. *Benedicite, omnia Opera, &c.* against the Sign of the Cross in Baptism, and many other such like human Inventions. These Complaints were subscribed by Archbishop *Usher*, Dr. *Williams*, Bishop of *Lincoln*, Dr. *Prideaux*, Dr. *Browning*, Dr. *Hacket*, Dr. *Ward*, and others; and by them presented to Parliament *. They, it is manifest, did not regard their Antiquity; but whether they were warranted by Scripture, or were meer human Inventions; and finding them the latter, according to the true Principles of Protestantism excepted against them. And a Regard to the same religious Sentiments are most likely to animate us in the Support of the Protestant Interest.

Farther to evince the Unreasonableness of an undue Veneration of Antiquity, I shall add the following Quotation from Dr. *Taylor* †, viz. “ That the Fathers met at *Laodicea*, at *Antioch*, or at *Nice*, 1000 or 1300 Years ago, should have any Authority over us in *England* so many Ages after, is so infinitely unreasonable that few but the Fearful and Unbelieving, that know not how to stand in the Liberty by which Christ has made them free, can account themselves in Subjection to them. If on this Account the Rulers of the Church will introduce any pious, just, warrantable Canon, we are ready to obey, where they have Power to command; but the *Canons*, he adds, for being in the old *Codes* of the Church, bind us no more than the Laws of *Constantine*.—No, they must go higher, to the first primitive Christianity, and Religion given us by Christ and his Apostles: For as Dr. *Stillingsfleet* has instructed us, Councils and Fathers, Traditions and private Spirits are no more our Rule than the Pope himself; and if we deny his Authority, it behoves us as Protestants to disclaim all human Inventions whatsoever.

This

* *Delaun's Plea*, P. 62.

† *Duct. Dub.* L 3. Ch. 4. Sect. 3.

This may serve as an Answer to a Question lately proposed in Favour of Liturgies. “ Whether in Point of Reason the Usage of the universal Church before the Reformation be not a proper Precedent for us to go by * ?

3dly, I am to enquire whether set Forms of Prayer are more expedient than *extempore*, on Principles of Reason.

In the preceding Part of this Dissertation, Prayer has been particularly considered, with respect to its moral Tendency and Influence on ourselves, and likewise when suitably qualified as of Efficacy with the Deity; these Dispositions and Pre-requisites have been considered, and the Point in Question is properly, which has the best Plea to answer these Purposes. This I shall not presume absolutely to determine, nor would I burthen the Reason with the Repetition of Observations before suggested; yet some farther Particulars may have their Use. I may also premise, that each may have a different Degree of Usefulness, according to the Conviction and Sentiments of the Mind concerning their respective Lawfulness and Expedience, Custom and Habit, or the peculiar Capacities and Circumstances of the Person's Praying.

Here I shall use the Words of the late Rev. Dr. *Watts*, with a little Variation, in respect to Forms †.

Are not such Forms of pious Address to God, as are drawn from a serious Sense of divine Things, and wrote by a skilful and judicious Hand of real Advantage to a sincere Worshipper, both in solitary and social Worship? Has not many a holy Soul found its inward Powers awakened and excited to lively Religion by such Assistances?— May not many a penitential Wish be excited under the Sense of Sin.— Many an ardent and suitable Ejaculation be offered for some peculiar Grace. Many a pious Aspiration
of

* Rev. Mr. *William Hawkins's* Tracts in Divinity.

† Miscellaneous Thoughts, Page 206.

of Heart, many a joyful Sound of Praise have owed its Rise to the Words and Language of some well-composed Form?—When we find the Temper, the Wants and Wishes of our Hearts happily expressed in the Words of a Form so suitable and so expressive, that we know not how to form other Words so suitable and so expressive of our own present State and Case, why should we not make our Addresses to God in this borrowed Language?”

On the other Hand, the Advocates for *extempore* Prayer, as I have already considered it, not of hasty sudden Flights, but the Result of Premeditation; conceive of such Prayer as the most natural, and tending most to the Improvement of pious Dispositions, and to produce a religious Conduct. That by learning to pray without a Form we learn the Language of a divine Intercourse, and acquire a Capacity and Disposition to pray.—That the constant Use of prescribed Forms implies a Neglect of the proper Use of our Faculties in Meditation and Prayer, of which they are evidently capable and wherein their noblest Exercise consist.—They say it is impossible that any Form should answer every Emergency, or take in the Variety of Cases of Christians at different Times.—That Forms are a Clog and Hindrance to a well-disposed Mind, whose Proficiency in Religion, and whose natural and acquired Abilities furnish him, to this Work, that to such Forms are not only unnecessary but inexpedient.

’Tis said to pray by Forms is inverting the Order of Things; that Prayer should take its Rise from the Heart, that Words are consequently to flow from the devout Sentiments, and not lead them. This may be properly applied to private Devotion. They urge the frequent Commands of Scripture to *Study* to use our *Abilities*, and to *watch* unto Prayer plainly; suppose that Prayer was not to be limited to Forms.—These argue likewise that the Promise of the divine Assistance implies the Propriety of *extempore* Prayer, and

and that if performed in this Manner to the best of their Ability, they have Reason to hope for the Acceptance of their Prayers.—With respect to public Forms of Prayer, they argue, that the constant unvaried Repetition of the same set Forms of Prayer has a great Tendency to introduce Coldness and Formality into divine Service; that where the same set Words and Phrases pass over the Ear in a constant Rehearsal, the Soul, by Degrees, loses those lively Influences and devout Sensations which it at first received from them. Some other Observations have already occurred, with respect to the Use of precise Forms, which are needless to repeat.*

But is there no Use to be made of the devout Compositions of other Men, without confining ourselves to all the Words and Syllables of their Writings: May we not enjoy their Help without making them our absolute Dictators? Sure there are Cases wherein they may not only be lawful, but have the Preference. Bishop *Wilkins* calls them Crutches, and says, there are some lame Christians that stand in Need of them. And as another Author expresses it, “to say nothing of the Inability contracted by Disuse, some are so mean in their Faculties; have so small a Stock of Ideas, and these so confused; have their Minds so little opened by their Knowledge and Sense of divine Things, and they move in so low a Sphere in Religion, that I don’t doubt but a well-composed Form may be useful to them for a Time; especially if got off Book, and take a prudent Liberty to vary it, and add to it as they can and find Occasion; and many of these Persons may, by their Endeavours, surmount the Necessity, and out-grow the Usefulness of Forms to them.”

And

* See upon this Subject Bishop *Wilkins* on Prayer, Rev. Mr. *Matthew Henry*’s Preface to the Method of Prayer, and Dr *Isaac Watts*’s Essay on Prayer and Miscellaneous Thoughts.

And it is certain, and indisputable, that Forms of Prayer are highly expedient for young Persons, for Children and Youth, to train them up in this Part of Worship, to give their Minds more extensive Ideas of divine Things, that for want of knowing how to pray, they may not wholly live in a Duty so natural, so indispensable, from its peculiar Tendency, to guard them against the Snares and Vices most incident to them in their Minority.

I have already, under the Title of Family Prayer, Chap. 3. Page 72. given some Instances of the Expedience of Forms; for I make no Doubt the Children and Servants of many Families have been trained up to constant Devotion and daily Acknowledgment of God, by these Assistances borrowed from holy and skilful Writers. And praying by a Form, may be likewise expedient at Seasons of Pain and Weakness, and in the near Views of Dissolution and Eternity, when the Mind needs the greatest Support and Comfort; unless where there has been a happy Treasure of divine Knowledge, and Practice has rendered the Language of Prayer, on such Occasions, easy and familiar.

With respect to Ministers of the Gospel, tho' they are generally Persons of good, natural and acquired Abilities; and tho' from the Nature of their Office they may reasonably hope for the divine Assistance suitable to their Wants, they are not to expect Miracles to be wrought in their Favour, but rather an Assistance to their Faculties in the Use of proper Means; and when in Consequence of their Character and Office, it becomes their Duty to find out acceptable Words, considering the Imperfections attending human Nature, and the extraordinary Occurrences, &c. that may discompose the Mind: The wisest and best of these may lawfully provide against these Circumstances, by Compositions of their own, in Seasons in which they are most capable of them, or the Compositions of others: Though I should be sorry to have them substituted and used to the Neglect of their own Abilities, and for
common

common as to render it a cold formal Devotion to the Society; yet there may be a rational and religious Use made of them.

Of the Language, or Phraseology, properly adapted to
PRAYER.

HEREIN I may, perhaps, differ from many pious Christians, when I recommend not only intelligible and significant Language, but Sublimity and Elegance of Stile, as best adapted to the solemn sublime Exercises of Devotion, and especially in the Part of Adoration.—But let me not be misunderstood, as though I apprehended that the Difference of Language affected Deity, in the same Manner as it affects Man.—Nor would I be understood to intimate, that the most unlearned, who find it difficult to say little more than *Lord have Mercy upon me*, may not be accepted and regarded.—Lastly, I would not recommend the same Elegance and Beauties of Language at all Times or in all Societies or Company, and there may be a much greater Latitude of Expression made use of in private than at any Time in public. But there is a careless Indifference that I would inveigh against, and persuade if I could every Christian to avoid; we should worship God to the best of our Capacities, our Thoughts ought to be expressed with Method, in Phrases grave and striking, and with such Eloquence as to engage our own and others Attention. This I would particularly recommend from the following Considerations.

First, That this is highly reasonable and becoming with respect to God. To address the supreme Being is the highest Dignity and Privilege of Men or Angels; Nature, therefore, would suggest a Regard to the Manner of our Address, and why should not the Form of Words, the Language by which we express our Ideas of God, the ardent Wishes and thankful

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Acknow-

Acknowledgments of our Hearts to him be a Part of our Care and Concern in this august Employment. The Scripture tacitly reproves an Indifference in this Matter, by forbidding that the Lame or the Sick should be offered in Sacrifice, *Mal. i. 6, 7, 8.* And we find the sacred Scriptures furnish Variety of lofty Expressions, very fitly adapted to this Duty, which would be tedious to enumerate; but those who are conversant with the Scripture must easily recollect them. *Moses's* Account of the Creation of God is truly sublime; *God said let there be Light, and there was Light;* and I have been highly pleased (to use *Mr. Hervey's* Language with some Variation) at *Solomon's* fine Address to the Almighty at the Dedication of his famous Temple.—“The Building was too glorious for the mightiest Monarch to inhabit, too sacred for unhallowed Feet to enter, yet infinitely too mean for the Deity to reside in. It was, and the royal Worshipper acknowledged it to be, a most marvellous Vouchsafement in uncreated Excellency, to put his Name there.” The whole Passage breathes such a Delicacy, and is animated with such a Sublimity of Sentiment and Language, that must attract the Attention of the curious Reader. Amongst other beautiful Expressions, how nobly does he bespeak the divine Presence; but will God indeed dwell on Earth? Behold the Heaven, and the Heaven of Heavens cannot contain thee; how much less this House that I have built. Incomparable Saying! and who would not chuse to possess such a devotional Frame! Who would not wish to imitate such a Sublimity of Expression!—The Book of Psalms, which is evidently the most devotional Part of Scripture, affords us Variety of beautiful as well as pertinent Phrases for the Exercise of this Duty. The Prophet *Isaiah* likewise uses an Elegance of Style almost inimitable, *Isaiah xl. 12. Who hath measured the Waters in the Hollow of his Hand and meted out Heaven with the Span, and comprehended the Dust of the Earth*

in a Measure, and weighed the Mountains in Scales, and the Hills in a Balance. Behold the Nations are as a Drop of the Bucket, and are counted as the small Dust of the Balance. He taketh up the Isles as a very little Thing : And many Parts of the New Testament afford proper and significant Matter for this Duty.

2dly, A copious, elegant Manner of Expression has a considerable Tendency to awaken and keep alive in our own Minds suitable Dispositions ; it promotes and improves the Pleasure of our devout Interchange, and preserves the Mind from that Flatness and Weariness, which are too apt to attend us in our religious Duties.

3dly, Propriety and Elegance of Expression are best adapted to promote and preserve Devotion in the hearers ; when God is invoked and adored in Language, expressive of great Ideas, of noble, extensive Conceptions of his transcendent immutable Perfections ; it strikes the Passions, awakens the nobler Principles of Reason and Consciousness, and tends to quicken and maintain the lively Exercise of their Faith, Love, Humility, Trust and Confidence in God ; so that, methinks, though the Form of our Addresses or Expression in Prayer is not principally to be regarded, there may be a sinful Indifference in this Particular.

Another Observation naturally connected with the former is, that we avoid every Species of unintelligible Language ; the Use of obsolete metaphorical Phrases, remote and uncouth Similitudes. The *English* Language is copious enough to furnish us with Words easy, natural, significant and elegant.

Again, it is highly becoming, that we avoid all Forms of Expression in our Devotion that cannot be reconciled with proper and natural Sentiments of the Justice, Wisdom and Goodness of that God, whom we profess to adore.

Furthermore. it can be no Ways incumbent on us, but on the contrary, seems rather impertinent and ab-

furd, to confess those Sins of which we never were guilty, particularly any that were committed before we were born.

Another Impropriety, I apprehend, in Prayer, is enumerating the particular Tenets and Principles of our Faith, in which it is very often certain that others cannot conscientiously join. This is too justly complained of in our established Forms, and too much imitated by some of our Protestant dissenting Ministers, though destitute of Command, or Precedent from Scripture.

Lastly, there is a Sort of modern Enthusiasm that claims my Notice, wherein God is represented as a partial, angry and inexorable Deity; as a severe, cruel and merciless Judge; in short, as the Dread and Terror of his rational Offspring, rather than as the Delight and Joy of his sincere Worshippers.

The Application of these Particulars are too obvious to need Specimens in Explanation or Proof of them, which I shall therefore omit.

Permit me to add, I have likewise observed an Elevation and Depression of the Voice and Quickness of Utterance in this Duty, that I could wish to see avoided; some Persons uttering the concluding Words of a Sentence, &c. so low as not to be heard; and others express themselves so quick, that the most attentive Mind can scarce join with them.

The second Part of this Work contains the Method of Prayer, in which the Expressions I have adapted to each Part, will, I presume, appear consistent with what I have before recommended, and with the Nature of the Duty.



A
TREATISE
ON
PRAYER.

PART II.

Of the METHOD of PRAYER.

Wherein the several Parts of Prayer are properly disposed, and suitable Expressions adapted to each Part, *viz.*

INVOCATION,	PETITION,
ADORATION,	PLEADING,
THANKSGIVING,	INTERCESSION, and
CONFESSION,	ASCRPTION.

With proper Transitions from one Part of Prayer to the Other.

C H A P. I.

Of INVOCATION, or Calling upon GOD.

OUR Father, who art in Heaven.
O Father, Lord of Heaven and Earth.
O Lord, the Everlasting God.
Holy, holy, holy Lord God Almighty.

Eternal and infinite Jehovah.

O holy and most merciful Father.

O thou that inhabitest Eternity.

Almighty incomprehensible Jehovah.

O thou universal Parent and Friend of Mankind.

Eternal and sovereign Spirit.

Almighty Sovereign, whose essential Glory is eternal and immutable.

O thou universal and everlasting Father.

O God, the Father of all Being, and Source of all Good.

O God of universal Nature.

O thou God and Father of our Lord *Jesus Christ*.

O thou eternal inexhaustible Fountain of Goodness.

O thou Father of excellent Majesty.

O thou Fountain of eternal Day.

O thou who art the most perfect and most amiable of all Beings.

Some Forms of intermediate Address:

Have Mercy upon us, O Lord, according to thine essential Goodness.

For thy Mercy Sake, O Lord forgive.

For thy Son's Sake, have Mercy upon us.

O thou propitious Nature, extend thy Compassion.

Graciously assist us, O God.

Grant according to the Riches of thy Grace.

O thou Father and Friend of Mankind, hear us when we pray.

O God most mighty, O holy and most merciful Father.

If consistent with thine infinite Wisdom, grant, &c.

O thou God of all Consolation.

O thou who art the Lover of Souls.

O thou who art the Hope and Succour of all thy rational Creatures.

TRANSITION,

TRANSITION, *from INVOCATION to ADORATION.*

This may consist in the three following Heads:

- I. In an Acknowledgment of God's supreme unalienable Right to all religious Worship.
- II. In a Declaration of our Intention, to adore and celebrate his Perfections. And,
- III. In a Profession of our Dependence on him, and a Desire of his Assistance and Acceptance.

I. Of God's supreme unalienable Right to Worship.

Before thy sacred adorable Majesty, the Angels in Heaven prostrate themselves continually, ascribing Glory, Honour and Majesty to him that sitteth on the Throne, for ever and ever.

Who hast Thousands of Angels worshipping before thee, and ten Thousand Times ten Thousand ministering before thee, who all wait the Intimations of thy Will, and are swift in the Execution of thy Pleasure.—

Before thee, the Angels and Arch-angels veil their Faces, astonished at thy Glory, acknowledging themselves as Nothing, and less than Nothing, when compared with thee, the spotless immutable Standard of all Excellency, Perfection and Happiness.

Let the Angels of Light praise thee in seraphic Strains, to whom thou hast been pleased to communicate more enlarged Capacities, for discovering the Wonders of thine Omnipotence; and let all Mankind cheerfully join their sincere, though fainter, Voices, esteeming it their Honour and most worthy Employment, to bear Part in the glorious Harmony.—

Who hast no Need of the Service of the most exalted Order of Beings, for thy Glory is essential and immutable.—Thou art, therefore, represented as condescending, to behold the Things that are in Heaven and on the Earth.—

We acknowledge it is comely, highly becoming, thine intelligent Creatures to contemplate the Father of their Spirits with supreme Delight, and to pay a rational, an affectionate and sincere Homage before thee.

Let Earth join with Heaven, in rendering Homage to thee, whose Judgments are unsearchable, and whose Ways are past finding out.——

We acknowledge ourselves unworthy, thus to appear in thy Presence, and to join in the Solemnities of thy Worship.——

We desire, therefore, to prostrate ourselves before thee with the most profound Humility, as to a Being of incomprehensible Majesty and unrivaled Glory.—

We adore thee, for the Encouragements we have received to draw near unto thee; that thou hast filled our Mouths with Arguments, assuring us thou art willing to do exceedingly and abundantly for us, more than we are able to ask or think.

We acknowledge, our Praises cannot extend to the Increase of thine Happiness; yet, as thou hast furnished us with Powers and Capacities which are to be improved and perfected by the noble Exercise of Devotion, we would joyfully engage in this our reasonable Service.

We esteem it our properest and noblest Employment to adore thee as the Creator of the Universe, and the Support of universal Nature.

We rejoice in the Privilege of our Natures, that we can join in these Solemnities, and participate the Pleasures of those exalted Spirits that sing thy Praises for ever.

Let the Heathens worship a Lye, and the Superstitious bow down to a God who hates the Works of his Hands; we will worship the one living and true God, the universal Creator, the beneficent Preserver, and righteous Governor of the World.

All thy Works praise thee, by their glorious and magnificent Appearance; but we, thy Creatures, capable

capable of viewing and contemplating them, desire to pay a voluntary and rational Homage at the Foot-stool of thy Throne.

We desire to approach with such just and worthy Apprehensions of thee as shall engage our best Affections, and dispose us to express our Faith and Hope, and Trust and Joy in God.

2. *A Profession of our Desire and Design to worship GOD, and of our Hope and Confidence in his Mercy.*

We desire, now, to approach unto thee as the supreme Object of all religious Worship, and of our most delightful Contemplation; who hearest all our Prayers; who healest all our Diseases; who crownest us with loving Kindness and with tender Mercies.

We would present ourselves before thee in the awful Sense of thy Perfections, and in the firm Persuasion that thou art merciful and gracious, ready to pardon our Imperfections, and lend a willing Ear to our Supplications.

We desire to approach the Throne of thy everlasting Mercy, for the Pardon of our Sins—for the Supply of our manifold Wants—for Relief and Succour, under all our Distresses—for thy gracious Concurrence, with our diligent and faithful Endeavours—to strengthen and assist us to acquire steady and invincible Habits of Virtue.

Thou hast said unto us, by the Signatures of thy universal Goodness, (in the Works of Creation and Providence, and by the most endearing Expressions in thy Word) Seek ye my Face; and we desire, in the most sincere, ardent and devout Affections of our Souls, to say, Thy Face, Lord, will we seek.—

We will come into thy Presence, in the Remembrance of thy Mercies; and in thy Fear will we worship thee in thy Sanctuary.

We desire, humbly, to refer ourselves, and all our Affairs, to thy unerring Conduct; and in every Thing,
by

by Prayer and Supplication, with Thanksgiving, offer up our Requests unto thee.

3. *A Desire of his Assistance and Acceptance.*

Assist us, O Lord, in these our Addresses.

Lord, fix our Attention in this solemn Exercise; rectify whatever is amiss in us.—Breathe upon our cold Affections, raise them to a divine Ardour, and let the Words of our Mouths, and the Meditations of our Hearts, be now, and evermore, acceptable in thy Sight.

Command our Souls into a religious Awe and becoming Seriousness.—Let us not dare to trifle, when we thus profess to present ourselves before thee.

May we now offer up a holy, humble, and spiritual Sacrifice, acceptable thro' *Jesus Christ*.

According to thine essential everlasting Mercy, accept us while in the unfeigned Devotion of our Souls we present ourselves before thee.

O that our Hearts may be warmed with a Sense of thy Goodness, with Principles of unfeigned Gratitude, that we may now offer up our united Prayers and Praises in an humble acceptable Manner.

Lord, help us to call in our Wandring, and restrain vain Thoughts.

When we thus present ourselves before thee to join in these religious Solemnities, may we remember we are before him to whom all Hearts are open, and all Desires known; let this influence our Minds to Reverence and Devotion.—Conscious of thine awful Presence, may we be ashamed of Hypocrisy, and never dare to trifle in these solemn Acts of Worship.

When we come before thee in this Place, and make Prayer and Supplication, then hear thou from Heaven, thy Dwelling Place, and forgive.

Though the Heavens are full of the Glory of thy Majesty, yet adored be thy Name; thou hast not confined all the Displays of thyself there, but condescendest

ascendest to shine with milder Glory in thine earthly Courts.—Oh, may we taste the Pleasures of devout Fellowship with God this Day.

This is a Day which the Lord hath made and separated to Acts of public Homage, and we rejoice that we are meeting many others to keep an holy Day unto the Lord.—O may we enjoy thy Presence and Blessings, to improve our Devotion;—to raise our Hearts above worldly Interruptions, and establish us in our Duty to thee.

Accept our Thanksgivings, and answer our Petitions so far as they are consistent with thy holy Will, and may be promotive of our truest Interest; and grant, that by our Attendance on thy Worship, from Time to Time, we may be rendered capable of paying a more perfect Service in the heavenly Regions.

Impress on our Minds, at this Time, a most serious and awful Veneration of thee, the great Original and Support of universal Life and Being.

We desire to maintain a constant uninterrupted Intercourse with thee, who art Light, and in whom is no Darkness at all.—Grant, that we, O blessed God, to whom thou hast been pleased to communicate a Ray from thy supreme Intelligence, may hereby attain to a Resemblance of thee.

We esteem it our inestimable Privilege, that we have Liberty to spread our Wants and Difficulties before thee, who art able to do exceedingly and abundantly for us, more than we are able either to ask or think.

May the Sacrifices we offer up before thee be continually holy, sublime, and spiritual, acceptable to God through *Jesus Christ*.

Let it not content us, that we appear in thine House, and join in the external Services thereof; but, let our Souls devoutly unite in worshipping of thee, that we may taste the rational and sublime Pleasure that flow from such Service.

To thee, our Souls aspire; to thee, our Hearts ascend, with fervent Zeal and holy Joy, to consecrate
the

the Powers and Faculties of our Minds to thy Service, from a Conviction of our Duty, and of its Importance to our Happiness.

Assist us, as we shall engage in the respective Parts of Worship, that by fixed and composed, sincere and upright Dispositions, we may perform the sacred Exercises of this Day, and close it with divine Pleasure and Satisfaction.

And, as some of us are this Day (in Obedience to our Lord's Appointment) to commemorate the Scheme of Salvation by *Jesus Christ*; assist us, we beseech thee, to admire and adore thine amazing Love in that Institution, and so to contemplate the Grace of our Lord *Jesus Christ*, and to love as Brethren,—that, by a Participation of the Bread and Wine, we may shew forth the Lord's Death till he come.

When we engage in these religious and devout Solemnities, may the Fire of sacred Love and Gratitude be kindled within us, and may our Tongues break forth in Strains of lively Thanksgiving.—

Being constrained by the amazing Love we contemplate, may we have the most sincere and vigorous Resolutions to live to him who loved us and died for us.

We would come with such humble and sincere Dispositions of Soul as that, God, who searches the Heart, will approve.

We desire, with the profoundest Reverence and Adoration, and with true filial Piety and Affection, to present ourselves before thee.

We would now direct the sole Attention and ardent Wishes of our Souls to the most high and sovereign, to the most wise and benevolent Parent of the Universe.

O that, by our frequent Intercourse with thee, the Source and Fountain of all Mercies, our Hearts may be strengthened and confirmed in the most beneficent Principles.

We are under the most sacred and inviolable Obligations to do Honour to thy great Name, and to adore thine

thine almighty Power, thine infinite Wisdom, thine all-comprehending Goodness.

O thou Father of our Spirits, may all our Acts of Devotion be calm, devout and rational, free from the least Mixtures of Diffimulation and Hypocrisy.

We desire, with the deepest Humility, to worship before the Throne of thine Infinity with the most worthy and respectful Sentiments, though our Conceptions are inadequate to thy Perfections.

We desire, at this Time, to worship thee with all the Understanding, Devotion, Piety and Sincerity, as may render it an acceptable Service, through *Jesus Christ*.

As we now presume to enter into thy more immediate Presence, may we remember as nothing can resist thy Power, nothing can escape thy Notice; for thou compasseth our Path and our Lyings-down, and art acquainted with all our Ways.—May we, therefore, worship thee in the Beauty of Holiness.

O everlasting Father of Mercies, incline a favourable Ear to our Supplications, and enter not into strict Judgment with us, thine unrighteous and unworthy Servants.

In Obedience to thy sacred Command, and the natural Dictates of our Minds, we would now most humbly and devoutly worship before thee.

Enable us so to contemplate the Glories of thy Nature, to refer ourselves to thy Care, to imbibe and enjoy Assistance from thyself, that this may be a happy Season to each of us.

May our Souls experience, by the Communications of thy Favour, that this is no other than the House of God, that this is the Gate of Heaven.

The preceding PARTS jointly expressed.

Under the awful Sense of thy supreme Perfection, we presume to present ourselves before thee at this Time. Lord, pardon our great Unworthiness, and accept our Addresses.

We

We come before thee, at this Time, in the firm Belief of thy Being and Providence, acknowledging the Reasonableness of worshipping thee, the supreme Lord of Heaven and Earth.—May our Minds be suitably disposed, to offer up an acceptable Sacrifice.

Thou, O Lord, hast made it our Duty, and we esteem it our Privilege and Happiness, to tread thy Courts—to hear thy sacred Word—to sing thy Praise, and to join in the Ordinances of thine House. Lord, meet us in these religious Services.

We rejoice at the kind Intimations thou hast given us, confirmed by indubitable Evidences, that thou art merciful and gracious, ready to pass by our Infirmities, and to lend a willing Ear to our Supplications.—May it be unto us according to thy Word, on which thou hast caused us to hope.

We would remember, with Thankfulness, that God is made known to us in the Gospel, as a Being of infinite Perfection, who knows all our Wants, is ready to hear our Prayers, and graciously accept our Repentance and Thankfulness.—Lord, prepare our Hearts, hearken unto the Voice of our Supplication, for unto thee will we pray.

'Tis our Happiness, that we are permitted to call upon thee as our Father, under that most amiable and engaging Name; we therefore desire to approach with Reverence and Affection of Soul. Lord, accept our Addresses.

'Tis our Privilege, that we can address thee not as the unknown God, but as that Being who has manifested thyself to us by the Mediums of our Senses, Reason and Consciousness. O gracious God, accept our Prayers.

O that the sacred Offices of Devotion in which we now engage, and the Requests we now make, may be agreeable to thy Will, and obtain thy gracious Acceptance.

O that, by recognizing and adoring the transcendent Excellencies of thy Nature, thy matchless Perfection, and

and unrivalled Dignity, we may acquire a reverential Awe and ardent Love of thy Majesty, and such a Desire to resemble thy moral Character, as may render our Service acceptable through *Jesus Christ*.

C H A P. II.

ADORATION: *Which may consist in the Mention of the Existence and Perfections of God.*

I. *Of the Existence and Unity of GOD.*

WE reverence and adore thee, as a Being self-existent and independent.

We acknowledge one God, necessarily existing, and of immutable Excellence.

The One, Supreme, Incomprehensible, All-powerful and Wise, and Good and Happy.

The Lord, the holy One of *Israel*, our King.

To us there is but one God, the Father of all Being and Source of all Good.

The God and Father of our Lord *Jesus Christ*.—

The Intelligent, first Cause of all created Nature, and the Object of universal Worship.

The Truth of thy Being is visible in every Object, in every Occurrence, and in every Thought.

All Nature proclaims thee to be the one living and true God; and throughout all Worlds, there is none besides thee.

We acknowledge, there is one only living and true God—One supreme Lord of all Things.—One eternal and infinite.—One supreme and independent.—One all-powerful and all-wise.—One perfectly good.—One God, who created all Things for his own good Pleasure, and on whose Will depends the Continuance of their Beings.

2. *Of the Greatness, Majesty, Glory and Perfection of GOD.*

Thine, O Lord, is the Greatness and the Glory, and the Majesty; for, all that is in Heaven, or on Earth, is thine.—

Thy Name alone is excellent, and thy Glory filleth both Earth and Heaven.

Thou art the first, the greatest, the wisest, and the best of Beings.

Glorious in Holiness, venerable in Praises, constantly and universally displaying Wonders.—The Immensty of Being and Eternity is thy Dwelling Place.

The whole Circuit of Existence is the Habitation of thee, our God most high.

Of whose incomprehensible Perfection and Happiness, the Angels themselves are not capable of forming adequate Ideas.

Thy Perfections are essential and independent, and thou must have remained absolutely happy, if there had been no Creatures to celebrate thy Glory.

Thou art glorious in all Perfection, the Source of all Being, and Power, of all Excellence, Dignity and Happiness.

How adorable are thy Perfections, who art exalted above all Blessing and Praise.

Honour and Majesty are before thee, Strength and Beauty in thy Sanctuary.

Who art possessed of all Perfection and Excellence that demands an eternal Tribute of Homage from all created Beings.

We ascribe Greatness unto our God; he is a Rock, his Work is perfect, and all his Ways are Judgment.

Thou art a great God and a great King, who shall declare thy Greatness, O Lord.

The Greatness of thy Majesty, none can comprehend.

One

One Generation shall praise thy Works unto another, and declare thy Greatness.

The Majesty and Grandeur of thy divine Perfections excite our Reverence and Admiration.—O Lord, how excellent is thy Name in all the Earth, who hast set thy Glory above the Heavens.

3. *GOD is a Spirit infinite, invisible, and incomprehensible.*

The infinite and eternal Mind.

The King eternal, immortal, and invisible, who dwellest in Light inaccessible.

Thou goest before us, yet we see thee not; yea, thou art every where about us, and within us, yet we do not apprehend thy Presence.

Tho' the Works which thou hast made demonstrate thine eternal Power and Godhead, we cannot conceive of thy Nature, nor comprehend thy Perfections.

Should we attempt by searching to find out God, we should soon be swallowed up and lost in that divine Contemplation; for thy Essence is spiritual, thine Attributes incomprehensible.

Who, by searching, can find out God; who can find out the Almighty unto Perfection?

But tho' we cannot conceive the Manner of thy Existence, and thou art invisible to our Senses; the Truth of thy Being is visible in every Object, in every Occurrence, and in every Thought.

We can trace the Foot-steps of thy Power, admire thy Wisdom, experience and even feel thy Goodness; yet thou holdest back the Face of thy Glory, thou spreadest Clouds of Darkness over it.

Though thou hast animated universal Nature; tho' thou actuatest our own, and movest in our Breast, thy Operations are absolutely imperceptible to us.

That supreme Spirit whom no Eye can see, whom no Thought can fathom, whom no Mind can comprehend.

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We adore thee as a pure and perfect Spirit, divested of all material Mixtures.

We acknowledge, that by what passes within ourselves, we can learn little more, than that the Nature and the Ways of God are infinitely remote from our scanty Faculties.

The sovereign and universal Spirit, the most glorious and amiable Object of our Contemplation.

SOVEREIGNTY, *and* ABSOLUTE DOMINION.

Thou hast prepared thy Throne in the Heavens, and thy Kingdom ruleth over All.

The most high God, Possessor of Heaven and Earth, of whom, through whom, and to whom, are all Things.

Who worketh all Things according to the Councils of thy own Will, both in Heaven and on Earth.

Thou art the Creator, the absolute Proprietor, and sole Governor of the Universe.

Thy supreme unlimited Dominion will endure for ever.

Who doest whatsoever pleasest thee, both in Heaven and Earth; and none can stay thine Hand, or dare to say unto thee, What doest thou?

OMNIPOTENT.

That almighty Sovereign, whose Power and Glory shines with astonishing Lustre in all thy Works.

Thy Works how grand, executed by Omnipotence divine.

At thy omnipotent Command, Worlds of Beings were brought into Existence.

We cannot form any Limits to the Effects of thine almighty Power, eternally creative.——How great and marvellous, how stupendous and numerous are thy Works, O Lord God Almighty!

O Lord God Omnipotent, how tremendous is thy Power.

OMNI-

O M N I P R E S E N T.

Could we transport ourselves beyond the Limits of Creation, we should be incircled in the Immensity of thy Presence.

Thou inhabitest Eternity, and fillest Immensity.

Thou not only created, but must ever be present with every Part of the real Universe, wherever any Part of thy Creation exist.

Earth, Air, and Sea ; yea, the Heaven of Heavens cannot contain thee.

Thy Presence, thine animating Spirit, not only supports the Worlds that now are, but thou existest throughout infinite Space beyond the Limits of all Worlds. Nothing can circumscribe thy Power. —

Whose omnipresent Spirit pervades every where ; —and to whom, all the Thoughts and Purposes of the human Mind must be exposed to View.

O M N I S C I E N T.

All Things are naked and open to the Eye of our supreme Governor and Judge.

Thou art perfectly acquainted with the Thoughts and Intents of our Hearts.

Thine Eye sees all our Thoughts, thine Ear hears all our Words, thy Light shineth in Darkness, and the Darkness comprehendeth it not.

Whither shall we go from thy Presence ? where can we fly from thy Inspection ? who comprehendeth at one View the whole Extent of Nature : Every Thing is open to him, with whom we have the most intimate Concern, and to whom we must be finally accountable.

Thou only knowest the Hearts of the Children of Men ; thou seest all their Goings ; and there is no Place so secret, where the Worker of Iniquity can hide himself.

Whither shall we fly from thy Presence ? If we ascend up into Heaven, thou art there, enthroned in

Light: If we go down to the Depth of the Grave, there thou art, seated in thy Pavilion of Darknefs. If we say Darknefs shall cover us, and expel the Light; surely the Darknefs and the Light are both alike to thee; created by thy Power, and subservient to thy sovereign Pleasure.

Thou sitteth in the Circuit of the Heavens, and at one comprehensive View takest in thy whole Creation.

Thy Knowledge is unclouded and universal Light. —Thine Eyes, O Lord, are in every Place; thou lookest to the Ends of the Earth, and seest under the whole Heavens.

We adore thee as the Heart-searching God; thou knowest our Down-sitting and our Up-rising; thou understandest our Thoughts afar off.

W I S D O M.

We celebrate thine infinite Wisdom, which is underrived, independent, and immutable —And in that infinite, unalterable Perfection, in which thou possessest it, thy sole Prorogative.

We therefore adore thee as the only wise, the blessed and only Potentate.

We acknowledge it impossible for us to form an adequate Idea of thine unerring Wisdom.—Yet, at the same Time, we are led to admire and adore thee, for the unlimited Displays thereof, in all thy Works.

Nature is thy handy Work, wherein thou hast displayed thy divine Wisdom, which demands our eternal Tribute of Wonder and Worship.

O Lord, thou hast established the Worlds by thy Wisdom, and hast stretched out the Heavens by thy Discretion: Manifold are thy Works, in Wisdom hast thou made them all.

All the Works of Nature afford us so many striking Instances of thy immense Wisdom, the most splendid and illustrious, the most engaging and admirable, to employ our sublimest Faculties.

We

We behold the Wonders of thy Wisdom in the minutest of thy Works; and the deeper our Searches are, the more we discern of inimitable Art, of incomprehensible Contrivance and Design.

Thine immense unfathomable Wisdom directs and guides all thine other glorious Attributes in their great and stupendous Operations.

Mighty art thou, O Lord, in Wisdom, and thy Thoughts are very deep; thou art wonderful in Counsel, and excellent in working. Wisdom was coeternal with thee, and thou didst possess her in the Beginning of thy Ways.

J U S T and R I G H T E O U S.

Judgment and Justice are the Habitation of thy Throne.

Holy in all thy Ways, righteous in all thy Works, and equitable in all the Dispensations of thy Providence.

As for God, his Way is perfect.

Whose Justice is always regulated by absolute Wisdom and impartial Goodness.

Thy Laws are founded on Truth and Equity, and executed with Wisdom and Beneficence.

Shall not the Judge of the whole Earth do right !

H O L I N E S S.

Who shall not fear before thee, O Lord ! for thou only art holy.

Holy and reverend is thy Name.

Who is like unto thee, O Lord ; glorious in Holiness, venerable in Praises !—Holy, without the least Blemish, and a Lover of Righteousness in all thy reasonable Creatures.

Holy, holy, holy Lord God Almighty !—the whole Earth is full of thy Glory.

Spotless Purity, and absolute Rectitude, are the essential Glories of thy Nature.

GOODNESS.

O thou eternal and inexhaustible Fountain of Mercy!—whose Nature is Love and Goodness itself.

Who is a God like unto thee, who retainest not thine Anger for ever, because thou delightest in Mercy.

Thy Goodness shines with peculiar Lustre in all thy Works.

Thy tender Mercies are over all thy Works.

The God of all Compassion.

Thou hast declared thyself the Lord God gracious and merciful; who, of thine essential, immutable, and everlasting Mercy, delightest in passing by the Transgression of thine Heritage.

We desire to have every ingenuous Affection excited in us, and to magnify this supremely glorious Perfection of thy Nature, which renders thee infinitely amiable, and the Joy of thine intelligent Offspring.—

Glory be to thee, O Lord, who art always, and immutably, disposed to do Good to the whole, and every Part of thy Creation.

The whole Earth is full of abundant Testimonies of thy loving Kindness and Mercy, and the minutest of thy Works praise thee.

FAITHFUL *and* TRUE.

Out of the Mouth of the most High proceedeth not Evil and Good.

The Works of thy Hands are Verity, they are done in Truth and Uprightness; great is thy Faithfulness.

The Heavens shall praise thy Wonders, O Lord; thy Faithfulness shall be praised in the Congregations of the Saints; who suffereth not thy Faithfulness to fail.

The faithful and true God that keepeth Covenant for ever.

A God of Truth and without Iniquity, just and right art thou.

ETERNAL

ETERNAL *and* UNCHANGEABLE.

Who only hath Immortality.

The Father of Light, with whom is no Variableness, nor Shadow of Turning.

Who art of one Mind ; who can turn thee ?—The Lord who changeſt not ; therefore, thy Compassion have not failed toward us.

Though the Heavens shall wax old as a Garment, and they shall be changed, yet thou art the same, and thy Perfections unchangeable as thy Nature.

We would, therefore, worship him who liveth for ever and ever.

ABSOLUTE PERFECTION *and* HAPPINESS.

As thy Perfections are essential, so thy Felicity is immutable ; Creation could not add thereunto, but it was Goodness, communicative and inexhaustible which gave Existence to Worlds.

Thou hast an absolute Fullness of Perfection in thyself, nothing can possibly add unto or detract from thine essential Glory.

Thou art the uncreated Original, from whom Wisdom flows as from its eternal Source,—in whom Power resides as in its native Seat, and to whom Goodness belongs as a vital and immortal Principle ; whom therefore, we esteem it our Duty and our Dignity eternally to adore.

A D O R A T I O N

May consist in the Mention of the divine Perfections as discovered in the Works of Creation, Preservation and Government of the Universe.

I. Of CREATION.

ALL thy Works shall praise thee, O Lord, for in Wisdom hast thou made them all.

Supreme Power, Wisdom and Goodness gave Existence to the Universe, ordained the Laws of Nature,

and thy constant vital Energy preservest all their Operations.

Who hast in a most stupendous Manner displayed the Excellency of thy Nature in all thy Works.

The Heavens declare thy Glory, O God, the Firmament sheweth thy handy Work.

We would celebrate the Greatness of thy Majesty and transcendent Wisdom displayed in thy Works, and conspicuous in thy Providence.

By the innumerable Effects of Intelligence, which we behold, we are led to acknowledge and adore thee as the first, the universal Cause, the Maker of Heaven and Earth, and of all Things visible and invisible.

Thou gavest Existence to universal Nature; thou spake and it was done; thou commandedst and it stood fast.—Who said'st, *Let there be Light, and there was Light.*—Who furnished with Variety of Suns; the Worlds thou hast formed, and displayed, not only Power but Wisdom and Goodness in all Places of thy Dominion.

How astonishing that almighty Power which didst at first create, and dost continue to support the Universe of Beings!—How surprising the Wisdom that reaches to all the Cases and Circumstances of the infinite Variety of Creatures!—How munificent that Bounty, how adorable that Goodness, that opens its Hand to supply the Wants of every living Thing!

Oh thou Preserver of Man and Beast, thy Mercy is established in the Heavens: Thy Faithfulness reacheth beyond the Clouds. Thy Righteousness is immovable as the greatest Mountains, and thy Judgment as the great Deep.

All Nations own thy Being, all Nature displays thy Perfections.

The Sun which warms and enlivens this Earth, the Moon and Stars which garnish the Heavens, ourselves, and all that surround us, are Heralds that proclaim thy Perfections,

Great

Great Author and Supporter of our Existence, though by an invisible Influence, thou art every where about us and within us, yet we do not apprehend thy Presence.

Thou art that supreme Being who animates and diffuses Beauty, Order and Happiness, throughout the whole Extent of created Nature.

Thou art that God, by whose incomprehensible Power the Worlds were created, by whose universal Providence they are sustained, by whose unerring Wisdom the Universe is governed, and by whose supreme Goodness Jesus Christ was sent into the World not to condemn Mankind, but to save them.

That supreme Deity, who formed and who upholds the Universe, with all the infinite Variety of Beings, by whom it is peopled and enjoyed.

In all the Works of thy Hands——In the Heavens above, and in the Earth beneath, in the infinite Variety of thy Creatures around us—And in our own stupendous Frame and Structure of Body and Mind ; thy Perfections, O God ! are displayed in such a Light, as strikes us with the highest Veneration.

The great Frame of Nature which we behold is a standing Monument, a perpetual Remembrancer of thy creating Power, thy marvellous Wisdom and eternal Godhead.

Thy Presence, thy immediate Interposition and Influence support the Frame and Order of the material World in every Part and Instant of its Duration.

Wherever we turn our Eyes Nature presents us with such Beauty, Regularity, Harmony and Usefulness, as gives us the clearest Demonstrations of thine Existence and Providence.

We acknowledge, that consummate Wisdom and Goodness are conspicuous in every Part of Existence.

The Sun, the express Emblem of thyself, proclaims thy Glory, the Moon which thou has appointed for Seasons, reflects thy Praise. The Stars, whom thou hast marshalled and callest by their Names, evidently

dently display thy unrivalled Power; thy matchless Skill, thy supreme Dominion demands our Adoration.

When the World was without Form, and Darkness pervaded the empty Space, thy omnipotent Word created Light; and displayed Nature in all her Variety and Beauty.

Thou formedst this stupendous Globe; thou ordainest the Laws of Nature, and thou supportest and directs all their Operations with an unerring Hand.

Who formed the Mountains, who created the Winds, who gave the Sea thy Decree that the Waters should not pass thy Command. Thou makest the Rain to descend, and causeth the Earth to bring forth Food for Man and Beast.

The Sun, Moon and Stars proclaim thy Power; Things animate and inanimate bespeak thy Wisdom. The whole System of Nature declares thy Beneficence.

Great and marvellous are thy Works, O Lord God Almighty, the whole Earth is full of thy Glory.

Thou didst stretch out the Heavens alone, and hast hung the Earth upon nothing. Thou comprehendest at one View the Immensity of thy Works, and all Nature subsists by thy supporting Energy.

By thy Understanding thou garnished the Heavens. — Thou appointedst the Sun its Place. — Thou ordainest the Moon for Seasons. — Thou sealest up the Stars. — Thou dividedst the Waves of the Sea. Lo these are but a Part of thy Ways, they are hid from our Contemplation.

By thy Power the Sun dispenses its benign Influences, proclaiming to surrounding Worlds this important Truth, that verily there is a God of unrivalled Power, of matchless Perfection, who presides in the Universe.

We admire the Wonders of divine Wisdom, displayed in such Variety to our View. O let our Eyes affect our Hearts, and lead us to adore the Hand that formed and that supports all Nature.

In the CREATION of MAN.

We acknowledge thee, O Lord, the Parent of all Nature, who from thine essential Beneficence didst form Man for the Purposes of Wisdom, Virtue and Happiness, and didst furnish him with Powers and Abilities adapted to these Ends.

How curiously adjusted and exactly finished the Mechanism of our Body.—How diversely capacious are the ripening Powers of our Minds.

Thou hast furnished those organized Bodies with an immortal Substance that must live eternally in some unknown State of Existence.—Adored be the great Author of Souls for these transporting Prospects, of which we are conscious.

Adored be thy distinguishing Mercy to Man, whom thou createdst in thine own Image, capable of those sublime Pleasures, which result from the Knowledge, the Imitation and Favour of God his Maker.

We glorify that Power, Wisdom and Goodness which we behold in our Frame and Constitution.

That thou hast made us susceptible of such Impressions as are suited to all the social, useful benevolent Purposes for which we were created.

That we are formed for the Satisfactions of Piety, Gratitude, Friendship, Integrity and Benevolence.

That we are rendered capable of viewing the Beauty, Order, Harmony and Design of many of thy Works, and of acknowledging the Perfection of the great Author of Nature.

Thou hast planted a Spirit in Man: The Inspiration of the Almighty hast given him Understanding.

That we are capable of knowing thee, the Centre of all Perfection and the Source of all Good.

That thou hast so dignified our Frame, and adorned it with such peculiar Faculties, as may enable us to discern the Harmony and inviolable Connection of thine Attributes.

We

We acknowledge it is the peculiar Felicity and Glory of Mankind, that they are capable of the Knowledge of God. A Knowledge the most grand and enlarging, the most sublime and enobling, the most delightful and transporting, the most instructive and improving of all others.

PROVIDENCE.

Though with respect to a particular Providence, Clouds and Darknes are round about us, thy universally beneficent Providence shineth conspicuous, and the Darknes comprehend it not.

We desire to reverence and adore thee as the supreme Lord of Heaven and Earth, who by the Word of thy Power, and by the efficacious Influence of thy Providence, directs and over-rules all Things for general Good.

Thy Power upholds, thy Presence animates, thy kind and gracious Influences cheer and comfort the whole Frame of Nature.

Tho' thou makest Darknes thy Pavilion, yet sufficient is known of thy eternal Power and Godhead by thy Works, that we must be inexcusable to deny thine Existence and Providence.

The Continuance of the Order, Harmony, Beauty, and Usefulness of this material Globe, are the Effects of thy omnipotent Command.—Thou spake and it was done, thou commandedst and it stood fast.

Day unto Day, Night unto Night, Seed-Time unto Harvest, Summer unto Winter, in their constant Successions; witness thy providential Care to be over all thy Works.

One Generation of Men shall declare thy mighty Acts unto another.—They shall abundantly utter the Memory of thy impartial, universal Goodness;—and shall sing of thy Righteousness.

Thine inexhaustible Power and Munificence are perpetually displayed in raising up, supporting, and liberally

rally providing for innumerable Families of thy Creatures around us; and declare thy universal Providence.

Thy sovereign and efficacious Providence is over the whole Universe, conducting and disposing all Events for the general Good of thy Creatures, and for the particular Advantage of those that sincerely serve thee.

Thy Providence runs through all the Earth, to behold the Condition, and supply the Wants of thy Creatures.

G O V E R N M E N T.

We reverence and adore thee as the supreme Lord of Heaven and Earth, who by the Word of thy Power, and by the efficacious Influences of thy Providence, directs and over-rules all Things for the general Good.

All Nature appears to be governed by original established Laws, nevertheless, they are absolutely subject to thy sovereign Controul.

Invariable Justice and impartial Goodness are the Standard of thy moral Government.

The Wisdom and Perfection of thy universal Administration are known only to thyself.

We acknowledge we are under the Government of an almighty, an all-wise and beneficent Deity.

Thy Government is founded in Wisdom, exercised and supported with Lenity and Mercy.

Thou art the universal Governor and absolute Proprietor of all Things.

Our supreme Governor, righteous and merciful, condescending to our Infirmities.

Whose Power is conducted by Wisdom, and the Measures of thy Government are Righteousness and Clemency.

We are the Creatures of thy Power, and the Subjects of thy moral Government.

We

We acknowledge thy sovereign Dominion over all Nature, and all created Beings owe their Life and Efficacy to thine unremitting Energy.

The World is thine, thou hast founded thy Dominion on the Earth, and established it on the Seas; and all Creatures that breathe in all Places of thy boundless Dominion, are the Creatures of thy Power, the Objects of thy Care, and the Subjects of thy Government.

We rejoice in the Assurance that we have, that thou art every where present, able and disposed to regulate all Affairs in all Places, as is most wise and fit upon the whole.

We rejoice that the Lord God, omnipotent, most wise, most righteous, and most merciful reignest.

We rejoice in the Clemency of thy Government, and in the Purity, Equity and Fitness of thy Laws.

We would always consider thee under the Character of the moral Governor of the World, who takest Cognizance of all our Actions, and will hereafter reward or punish with Equity and Judgment.

GENERAL EXPRESSIONS.

O thou all-holy, all-glorious, and supreme Governor of all Things.

Thy Power, none can resist;—thy Knowledge, nothing can escape;—thy providential Goodness extendeth to all;—thy Faithfulness faileth not;—holy and reverend is thy Name.

We adore thee as the only good and holy, as the blessed and only Potentate, who rulest supreme over all, and who alone hast Immortality.

All Beings are supported by the Energy of thine Omnipotence, enlivened by thy invigorating Presence, and continually refreshed by the Overflowings of thy Goodness.

We

We acknowledge not only thine Existence and active Power, but that thou art the Former, the Preserver and the Governor of the universal System of Beings.

We acknowledge thee the universal Parent of Nature, absolute in Wisdom, in Power, in Goodness, and in all other natural and moral Perfections.

Thy Perfections are the Object of the most reverential and delightful Contemplation to Angels, and to Archangels, to all those glorified Spirits above, whose Dignity and Happiness it is to celebrate thy Praise.

We adore thee as a Being of infinite Wisdom, consummate Knowledge, impartial Justice, and universal Beneficence.—Whose Wisdom guides all thy Administrations; and whose Power, conducted by Goodness, is the everlasting Security of the Righteous.

All thy Works bear such Signatures of inimitable Skill, of supreme unlimited Goodness, which distinguish and adorn the whole Creation.

Thou art that Spirit who animateth the immense Frame of Nature, that supports it by thy unremitting Energy, and art the proper Object of the Love, Fear, Trust and Joy of all thy rational Offspring.

The one Supreme, Incomprehensible, All-powerful and Wise, Good and Happy; before whom it is our Duty to fall down and worship.

That, instead of leaving us in the dreadful Uncertainty where is God our Maker, in whom we may sincerely repose our most valuable and important Interest; thou hast been pleased, on all the Works of thy Hands, and in all the Methods of thy Providence, to write thy Name in the most legible Characters.

As the whole of this stupendous Fabric was the Effect of thy unsolicited Goodness, so to convince us that all Things are dependent on thee, thou hast made all the Parts, with their various Beauties, Efficacies and Connections, subject to change; and canst alter,
or

or destroy, at thy Pleasure, whatever the right Hand of thy Power and Majesty hast formed.

The Glories of thy Nature are the Glories of absolute unrivaled Power of immaculate Holiness, of perfect Rectitude, of unfathomable Wisdom, and of universal immutable Goodness.

The more curiously the Works of thy Hands and the Dealings of thy Providence are considered, the more thou shinest in the Characters of unrivaled Power, consummate Wisdom, and adorable Goodness.

Order and Harmony is essentially and immutably the Rule of thy supreme Essence. Order, which all intelligent Creatures are so much delighted with—whence all Beauty derives its Origin—by which alone Things attain their respective Ends; is the Law which thou preicribest in all thy Works, and that which render them so beautiful and so perfect.

Of our Affiance, Confidence and Hope in God, in the Belief and Remembrance of the Divine Perfections, and of his Goodness towards us.

O thou indulgent Parent and Friend of Mankind, the worthy Object of the supreme Love, and Delight of all intelligent Beings.

O God, our Hope and Confidence is founded on thy infinite unchangeable Goodness.

Tho' we are surrounded with many Difficulties, and subject to the Frailties and Infirmities of this mortal State; yet thou hast given us sufficient Motives to excite our Hope, our Trust and Joy in thee.

The various Displays of thy Perfections loudly call upon us to worship and fall down before thee, to place our highest Trust and Confidence in thy never-failing Goodness—to refer Ourselves and our Concerns to thy unerring Conduct.

We will rejoice in thy Goodness; we will praise thee for thy manifold Works.

O thou

O thou perfect Excellence, infinitely lovely and adorable ; it is thy Goodness as conducted by Wisdom, that we esteem a rational Ground of our most chearful and exalted Praises ; and in which we desire to confide, for the Supply of our future Wants.

Our Meditation of thee shall be sweet ; we will be glad in the Lord.

To whom, O thou almighty Sovereign, can we look for Success, under all the Difficulties that surround us, but to omnipotent Power as our Protector, to unsearchable Wisdom as our Guide, and to thy never-failing Compassion as our Hope.

We would rejoice in thee always, O thou Supreme, whose Spirit animates and supports all Worlds, and who maintainest one uniform Order in the Government of the moral World.

We rejoice in the Rectitude of thy moral Government, that in every Nation those that truly fear thee, and according to their Light and Ability work Righteousness, will be accepted of thee.

Let the Contemplation of the various Manifestations of thyself produce increasing Ardor and Delight in the Virtuous, Reformation of Manners in the Degenerate, Confidence of Mercy in the Penitent, and calm Resignation and Hope in the Afflicted.

In the Multitude of our Thoughts within us, thy Comforts shall delight our Souls.

Select Expressions, chiefly of a philosophical Kind, which may be used on special Occasions, or at other Times assist our Meditation, and excite our Devotion.

Of the MATERIAL SYSTEM.

Oh, amiable all-perfect Deity, thou Sovereign of Wisdom and Order, how stupendous are thy Works !

Whose Glory is no less than the Pre-eminence and unrivalled Dignity which result from thy supreme Dominion and infinite Perfection, displayed in the Constitution of Nature, and in the Preservation and Government of the Universe.

We desire to celebrate thy matchless unrivalled Perfections displayed in thy Works, their Correspondence to each other, their exquisite Structure, their exact Proportion, and admirable Uses.

Who, uncircumscribed by Time or Space, pervades the Universe, and art intimately acquainted with the whole Extent of Nature; who inspired its Powers, preserves its Connections, and conducts all its Operations with an unerring Hand.

Thou hast formed the Light and created the Darkness, and made the Out-goings of the Morning and Evening rejoice.—Thou didst separate the Air, constituted it a Firmament, made it the Instrument of Life, and named the vast expanse Heaven.

When we view the vast Fabric of the material World, formed with exquisite Wisdom, continued to be governed by its original established Laws, maintaining the same Proportion and Harmony, and conducive to the same admirable Uses, it leads us to own the Being, to reverence the Power, to admire the Wisdom, and adore the Goodness of its eternal Architect.

We would recognize thy Being and universal Providence, that Power which penetrates the Essence and inmost Particles of Matter, combines the remotest Objects in mutual Sympathy and Concord, and operating by unmechanic Force, produced and sustains the most perfect Mechanism of a World.

When we view the Beauty and regular Frame of external Nature, the continual and regular motion of all the Globes of Heaven, their Revolutions about their Centres, their mutual Attraction and Gravitation, we are astonished at the Omnipotence and Wisdom of the great Author of Nature.

The wide Expanse of universal Nature, the admirable Order and exquisite Beauty of its constituent Parts, the Preservation of that immense Frame, in constant perfect Harmony, Use and Beauty, loudly proclaim thy Perfection, and excite our Devotion.

We

"We would celebrate thy matchless Skill which constituted the stupendous System of the material World, who ordained the Sun to adorn the Day, the Moon and Stars to govern the Night; who formed the Earth, and built the Skies; who poured forth from thy Hand the watery World, and breathed the all-surrounding Air.

When we view the constant regular Motion of those glorious Orbs of Light which surround us,—or descend to contemplate the inferior Wheels and Movements of this beauteous ever-moving Machine, we cannot but adore that almighty Power who impress, and ever impresses, that mighty never-failing Energy, by which the whole Creation continues always fair and flourishing.

When we consider the Heavens and Earth, the Seas and Mountains, with all their Furniture, forming one vast Mansion for Man, Beast and Reptiles, it leads us to adore that skilful Hand who formed, and him whose universal Providence, supports them all.

Thou hast so admirably adapted the Frame of this visible World, so far as it is subject to our Senses, or the Contemplations of our Minds, that, by the Works of thy Fingers, we are led to adore thee as the Fountain of Wisdom.

It is thou who has ordained and fixed the Sun in the Firmament of Heaven, so as to dispense his Light and Heat regularly, and in the most exact Proportions, to the planetary Worlds.—Thou hast marshalled all the Stars in the nicest Order, and preserved them in their proper Places.—Thou hast laid the Foundations of the Earth, that it should not be moved.—The whole Earth is full of thy Riches, and affords most glorious Proofs of thine infinite Skill.

We are inspired and animated, by considering the Greatness of thy Works, their admirable Composition, exquisite Beauties, and harmonious Tendencies to universal Good; to magnify thee, the great Former and Disposer of the Whole.

Thou hast charmed our Senses, by the wonderful Apparatus and Decorations of thy Works—Astonished our Imagination, by the immense Variety, infinite Complication, and yet marvellous Regularity, in the great Machinery—Informed our Reason, by the Simplicity and Coherence of Design which runs through the whole—Interested and inspired every Affection of our Souls, by the amazing Subserviency of all the Parts and Movements of the vast Machine to strike, to delight, and render us happy.

It is thou, O God of Nature, that to this Day exerts, and to the End of Time will exert, that secret, but unremitting Energy, which is the Life of this majestic System, and the Cause of its stupendous Operations.

Who maketh the Clouds thy Chariot, and the Winds thy Messengers; all the Elements fulfil thy Command; Darkness is thy Pavilion; the Earth is thy Foot-stool; all-Nature is thy Temple; all-Space is thine Abode; every living Thing is the Work of thy Hand; and over all thy parental Care and tender Mercy extends.

Who formed this vast Machine, and adjusted its nice Dependencies. The Pillars that support it, the Embellishments that adorn it, and the Laws that govern it, are the Result of thine unsearchable Councils.

Power belongeth unto the Lord, and in what majestic Lines is this Attribute of *Jehovah* written, throughout the whole Volume of Creation, described in infinite Pages, and unfolded in the starry Heavens?

When we contemplate the Works of Nature, we cannot but adore that almighty Hand that gave them Being and Beauty; who created the Materials, and composed an infinite Multitude of Animal Forms and useful Substances; who arrayed the Heavens with a variegated Blue, and cloathed the Earth in a Livery of Green; whose Omnipotence established the Mountains; whose Wisdom garnished the Vales, and gave such Perfection to the whole visible System.

Thy

Thy Works proclaim thy Power, thy Wisdom and Goodness, in the Number, Beauty, and Order of the heavenly Bodies, their Magnitudes, Distance, Motions and Gravities, their Influences and Effects.

O what wonderful Force fixed some of those vast Globes on an immovable Basis! What irresistible Impulse rowls others on, thro' the dark Profound! And what coercive Energy confines their Course within the nicest Bounds! What but thy Sovereign Command, who spake, and it was done!

We admire, with Adoration, the Grandeur and Magnificence of the Evening Sky; we behold, with Pleasure, the Moon walking in Brightness amidst the Stars of Light; we must acknowledge the Power of him, who by his Spirit hath garnished the Heavens, and formed the glorious Constellations.

What admirable Order is conspicuous in the whole Edifice of Nature, and reigns through every Part. If we survey the Globe on which we live, how commodiously the Earth and Waters are dispersed, throughout the whole, to answer not only the Conveniencies, but the Pleasures of Life.

How usefully and ornamentally is the dry Land diversified into Mountains and Vallies, Hills and Dales; consisting of admirably various Soils and different Moulds, adapted to respective Vegetables and Plants, adorned with a lovely Carpet of Green, and overspread with a Variety of Trees, Plants and Flowers, embroidered with beautiful Colours, and disclosing Pleasure to the Eye, Fragrance to the Smell, and Sweetness to the Taste.

The several Parts of this material Frame, how distant soever in Situation, and different in their Matter and Composition, do yet operate on each other, and concur, by an Almighty, tho' Invisible, Influence to the Production of Good.

All Nature is one wondrous Piece, one conspiring whole; and all the Parts that compose this universal System are held together, by thine almighty Hand, by a powerful, tho' unseen, Chain.

Thou, O God of Nature, supreme in Wisdom as in Power, art the Author and Mover of the whole; who inspires its Powers, preserves its Connections, and conducts all its Operations with an unerring Hand.

When we survey the wondrous Fabric of the Heavens, their august Magnificence, immeasurable Extent, and beneficial Influences on this lower World, they afford a striking lively Representation and convincing Evidence of thy infinite Glory, thy boundless Immensity, and diffusive Benignity.

By thine almighty unremitting Energy, the Sun continually exerts his Influences, dispensing Heat, and diffusing Light to all those Orbs which revolve about him in their stated Periods; and the Earth, enlivened by his Beams, continues its prolific Quality, and produces not only every Thing necessary to our Support, but a most agreeable Variety for our Accommodation.

The Sun, the unwearied Messenger of thy Beneficence, receives all its Supplies of Light and Heat from thy genial inexhausted Treasure.

The Sun, bright Image of thy immense Benignity, not only enlivens the animal, but supports the vegetable World, and ripens and prepares Matter for all the Purposes of Vegetation.—And though we cannot fully comprehend the wondrous Properties and Operations of this prodigious and astonishing World of Fire, we are led to adore thee the Author of its Existence and Effects.

Thou commandest him, O universal Parent, to enlighten and cheer surrounding Worlds, by the perpetual Diffusion of his Bounties.

We view, with devotional Rapture, that immense Luminary, as the noblest Emblem of Deity in its Lustre, Energy and Usefulness in thy Works.

Without its divine Influence, Nature would be but as a lifeless Mass; the Trees could never break forth into Leaves, nor Plants spring up into Flowers; the Meadows never be mantled over with Green, nor the Vallies be cloathed with Corn—No longer would the

Fig-

Fig-Tree blossom, or Grapes ripen in the Vine; the Fruit of the Olive must fail, and the Fields could yield no Meat.

The Sun, by his diffusive Rays, enlighten and cherish the planetary Worlds, and penetrate into the inmost Recesses of Nature; so that nothing is hid from the Heat thereof.

The Sun, inexhausted Source of Light, Heat, and Comfort, (who, without the Assistance of any other Fire) sheds Day through a thousand Realms, and even extends its enlivening Influences to surrounding Worlds; so beautiful in itself, so beneficial in its Effects; leads us to acknowledge its Maker with the highest Reverence and Gratitude.

The Moon, amongst others of thy Works, shines to thy Praise, and evince the Power, Wisdom, and Majesty of him who made it, established its Place, and causest it to fulfil the great and excellent Purposes of its Creation.

What majestic Scenes does Nature present, how incomparably grand, how exquisitely fine.—The Moon, like an immense crystal Lamp, pendent in the magnificent Cieling of the Heavens.—The Stars, like so many Thousand of Golden Tapers fixed in their Azure Sockets, all pouring their Lustre on the spacious Earth, and opening a Prospect wide as the Eye can glance, and more various than Fancy can paint.

By thy Command, amazing Comets move in their respective Orbits, and perform their determined Revolutions.

We would adore that omnipotent Being who rolled those stupendous Orbs from his creating Hand, and leads them, by his providential Eye, through unmeasurable Tracts of *Æther*; who bids them now approach the Sun, and glow with unsufferable Ardours; and thence retreat to the utmost Bounds of our planetary System, and make their Entry amongst other Worlds.

The Air, that yielding and expansive Element, like the Breath of God, not only feeds and nourishes the

vast Variety of living Creatures, but even the vegetative Tribe, which could not subsist without this common Pabulum.

What astonishing Wonders are performed by that simple Engine, the Power of Gravitation or Attraction, by which the huge machinery of Nature is linked in inviolable Union, and the vast Worlds of Matter continue suspended and ballanced in perfect Equilibrium!

Oh Almighty Former! To it thy prime Minister in our World we owe the Stability of our Mountains, the Current of our Rivers, the Ascent of our Springs, and Vapours which descend by the same Influence in Rains to refresh and fructify the Earth.—To it we owe our Tides, which keep the immense Collection of the Waters continually fresh and wholesome, and the Ascent of the nourishing Juices to the Tops of the highest Trees.—In this wonder-working Power we would recognize thy Being, thy universal Providence and unrivalled Dominion.

Thou didst appoint the various Revolutions of the heavenly Bodies for the Measuring of Days and Months and Years, and for producing the pleasing Vicissitudes of Day and Night, Summer and Winter, Seed-time and Harvest, through all Generations.

Great and marvellous are thy Works, O Lord God Almighty.—What is there in all Nature but thee: Thy Perfections are displayed thro' every Part of thy Works. Thy Light shineth in Darknes, and the Darknes comprehendeth it not.

We adore thee O thou infinite Excellence, how comprehensive thy Mind, how wondrous, beneficent thy Plan, and how unfathomable thy Wisdom, which nothing can equal, but the Power that hath executed thy Counsels!

Of the W A T R Y E L E M E N T.

Whilst the Heavens declare thy Glory, and the Firmament sheweth thy handy Work ; thy supreme Power and Wisdom are no less displayed in that *vast Abyss*, whose Bounds thou hast circumscribed and rulest by Laws indefectible and unfathomable.——Wherein are Creatures infinite in their Number, astonishing in their Diversity of Nature, Colour, Form and Taste ; and all adapted to the Element in which they reside, and made subservient to the Support and Accommodation of Man.

Who hath divided a Water-course for the overflowing of Waters ? Or a Way for lightning of Thunder ? Out of whose Womb came the Ice ; and the hoary Frost who hath gendered it ?

We praise thee, O thou supreme Ruler of this vast and mighty Ocean, who hath measured the Waters of it in the Hollow of thine Hand ;—and who hast prescribed the Limits beyond which it cannot pass ; —— That thou hast appointed it to supply Vapours and Clouds, Fountains and Rivers.——To adorn the Earth with Verdure and Beauty, and for the Support and Refreshment of all its living Inhabitants.——That thou hast made the watry Regions a Means of common Society and mutual Friendship to all Mankind, of the most distant Nations of the Earth.

We adore thy Wonders in the Deep, formed with such amazing Art as strike us with Reverence and Awe.——There go the Ships, the Vehicles of Commerce.——There is the *Leviathan*, whom thou hast made to play therein.——Where thy Power and Goodness is conspicuous in the Number and Variety of Fishes it sustains, which contribute to our Support or Pleasure.

Thou gatherest the Waters of the Sea together as an Heap, and layeth up the Depth as in Store-houses.
Thou

Thou waterest the Hills from thy Chambers; the Earth is satisfied by thy Beneficence.

Of the V E G E T A B L E P R O D U C T I O N S .

To thee the vegetative Tribe owe all their Bloom and Beauty; the Earth supports the Plants, Air and Water nourish them; the Plants supply the Animals with Food, all subordinate to each other, and subjected to the Element in which they reside.

How luxuriantly does the vegetative Production display Perfection and Skill divine.—The Plants each in the Order assigned to them unfold their Blossoms and Flowers, and make all the Preparatives necessary for the happy Production of the Fruit they are to yield.

The admirable Diversity of Plants and Flowers in Figure, Texture, Colour, Disposition, and in all their Variety, successively advancing to Perfection, and contributing by thy Command to the Embellishment of the immense Theatre, declares to all reasonable Beings, that supreme Wisdom and infinite Skill superintends the Whole.

The Sun diffusing its piercing Rays, entering the fertile Mould ripens the vital Sap, and exalts it into the slender Tubes. — That nutritive Juice, being attracted along the minute Canals, shoots up in Branches, expands into Leaves, bursts out in Buds, and cloathes them with all their blushing Honours.

Each Field, yea every Animal, Flower or Fruit, affords us a rational Amusement, and furnish us with a Magazine of Wonders worthy the great Author of Nature, and sufficient to excite our Admiration or Praise.

We are delighted and led to adore the skilful Hand that adorned Nature with such splendid Dies, and Paints her with such rich and shining Colours.

What-

Whatever our Hands plant thy fructifying Showers water.—Fields are our Storehouse. — Every Season brings us the choicest Productions, all lovely as they are useful : The whole Scene exhibits a Fund of Pleasure to the Mind, while at the same Time they supply our Wants.

We would join the Voice of Nature with the rational Strains of Devotion, and improve the fragrant Oblation, by mingling with rising Odours our Tribute of Praise.

Of various SPECIES of ANIMALS.

The whole Creation talk aloud of thee, and echoes with the Repetitions of thy holy Name.—The Number and Grandeur of thy Works bespeak thee to be immensely great, possessed of universal Dominion ; their astonishing Beauty shews thee to be a God of Order and Perfection, and their extensive Usefulness discovers thy exuberant Goodness.

When we take a View of that Variety of Creatures which inhabit this inferior Globe, and the Workmanship that appears, even in the meanest of them, we find such astonishing Beauty, such Proportion, Œconomy and Design, as proclaim thy supreme Power and matchless Skill.

Infinite Races and Successions of Animals spring from thy Goodness, and every Corner of thy wide Domain swarms with Life and new Creation.—Nicely is the Œconomy of every Creature adjusted to its Rank and Make, and exquisitely formed for imbibing its proper Satisfaction.—How curiously is each of them armed against the Dangers to which their Situation exposes them, by proper Instincts or Weapons of Defence.—The Parts how admirably framed for continuing the Species, so that Nature is ever teeming with new Births to repair the Breaches made, and maintain the Succession of Beings, who are to live and to be happy on her inexhaustible Stores.

The

The smallest Seed, the minutest Insect discover the Skill of Providence in the Aptness of its Contrivance for the Purpose it is to serve, and displays an Elegance of Beauty beyond the utmost Stretch of Art.

Amidst that Variety of Creatures formed by thy almighty Hand, the Largeness and Strength of some strike us with Wonder and Terror; others astonish us with their Beauty; but we are lost in Amasement, when we attentively examine the several minute Parts of an infinite Species of others.

We behold thy wonderful Providence, whether it actuates an enormous Mountain of Matter, or enlivens an Atom.

Through what an ascending Scale of Being and Beauty are we led to recognize the universal Mind, who formed every Link of the immense Series, and had the several Orders move upward, and succeed each other in regular Progression, and all be happy in each successive Station to the utmost Extent of their Capacity and Condition.—From rude and unformed, we rise to polished, animated Matter.—Thence we advance through almost infinite Orders of animal Life, till Instincts well nigh coincide with Reason, and the Brute is refined into Man, whose superior Frame points out Intelligence, Wisdom and Activity.

Whilst the inferior Creatures in silent Eloquence declare the Glory of God, we who are capable of free and proper Acts of Worship would sing thy Praise, and adore the supreme Benefactor for the Blessings thou bestowest on every Order of Beings, and for those peculiar to ourselves, especially for that noble Gift of a rational and immortal Soul.

Of the RATIONAL CREATION.

We would adore and celebrate the unalterable Glories of thy Power, adorned and directed by unerring Wisdom, unbounded and universal Goodness.

We

We magnify that stupendous Instance of supreme Power of divine inimitable Skill of rich diffusive Beneficence, the Creation of Man.

We are fearfully and wonderfully made, not only in the curious Frame and Structure of our Bodies, but in the far more noble and exalted Faculties of our Minds, the most resplendent Emanation of thyself.

Marvellous are thy Works, and that my Soul knoweth right well. — In the Composition of my Body there are as many Wonders as Particles, and the putting them together increases the Wonder beyond Expression. It strikes me with Astonishment, and with a Dread of thy Majesty, whose Power alone can do this, who art intimately acquainted with thy Creature, able to unravel what thou hast so finely put together; I know that all thy Works are marvellous, but this of my Body is eminently so, far above all human Skill, as it was enveloped from the Observation of all Eyes but thine to see Nature, darting her vital Energy thro' every Particle, in a Manner so directed by thee, as to serve a thousand Intentions at once. — In this Work is laid out Art and Curiosity inimitable and supreme. Here divine Skill resolved to be exquisite! it was according to the Model of eternal Wisdom. When the omnipotent Creator said, Let us make Man, the Plan was then laid out for this Piece of Art, there thou hadst the Names and Number, Situations and Intentions of every Part, to a Nerve, to an Artery, and according to that was I made. — In Progress of Time, and by Degrees unfolded, formed into that Distinction of Parts, which before lay wrapped and intangled together in that Mass which was the Chaos of this little World—Till thy creating Word formed the several Regions of Body, Members, Arteries, Muscles, Fibres, and all the other innumerable Diversifications, and adapted all to their several Uses and Designs, and it was so: Therefore will I praise thee, and give thee the Glory of thy Wisdom and Power, in that I am so fearfully and wonderfully made.

To thee, O thou God of Nature, we owe the Continuance of our Beings : That the Wheels of Nature move within us, and the vital Fountain plays impelled by thy Power, and the Blood flows through innumerable Channels, and gives Sense, Life and Motion to the whole animal Frame.

Thou hast placed Man on the utmost Verge of this material World, conscious of an higher Relation, taught to lift his Head with high Ambition into that of Spirits, else whence this Quickness and Range of Thought ?—Why this Flight of Imagination and Divinity of Reason ? Whence but from the Source of all Intelligence and Wisdom.

Thou hast placed him a Spectator of thy majestic Works, above and below ; and by stamping on his Mind the Features of Divinity, superior Thought and Reason hast given him to recognize his Relation to thee, his eternal Parent.

Thou hast settled that Poise amidst the various Powers of his compounded Frame ; thou hast planted those generous Feelings in the human Breast, which, being duly cultivated, yield unfailing Rapture ; and, by forming Man to a Sympathy with universal Nature, hast allowed him to taste the Pleasures of Divinity.

Let us gratefully acknowledge our Obligations to thee, the supreme Benefactor, and adore the bounteous Hand that has crowned with such Glory and Excellence of Nature.

Thou hast given us organized Bodies, fearfully and wonderfully made, bearing the strongest Marks of the divine Wisdom and kind Intention in every Part and Member thereof ; and thou hast placed a noble Inhabitant within, whose Faculties and Dispositions, with a Capacity of endless Improvment in Knowledge and Virtue, are the surest Proof and truest Image, here below, of thy infinite Wisdom and Goodness.

Thou hast constituted Man, the Head of this inferior Globe, capable of discovering ten Thousand Beauties,
deriving

deriving from thence a Source of Delight and Joy—capable of contemplating, admiring and adoring our Maker's Work, and of bearing his illustrious Image.

When we take a View of our Frame, we see Matter most curiously wrought in a Variety of Shapes, fitted to make a convenient Habitation for the Soul, and intimately united to an intelligent Being, which has Power of Reflection upon its own Operations, capable of knowing and contemplating thee, the supreme, eternal and infinitely perfect Being.

Though the Sphere of our bodily Action is narrow and limited, that of our Mind is vast and extensive beyond the Bounds of Matter, formed for the Enjoyment of intellectual Pleasure—whose Happiness arises from Knowledge, and whose Knowledge increases in Proportion, as we discover and contemplate the Variety, Order, Beauty and Perfection of the Works of Nature.

O thou sovereign Creator, inspire our Minds with an increasing Delight, in the Contemplation of the Beauties of thy Works, and in the Adoration of their almighty Author.

Great God, thou ever-present, ever-streaming Fountain of Light and Love, assist us to bend our Souls in low Prostration before thee, invested and sustained as we are by thine awful Presence. Enable us, O thou supremely Great and Good, to celebrate thee, in unaffected Strains of Praise, as our common Parent, our Friend and God; and when our Souls shall ascend the celestial Regions, may we be prepared for the full Enjoyment of intellectual Happiness; in thy presence, where our Felicity shall be adequate to our most exalted Wishes, and lasting as our immortal Souls.

TRAN-

TRANSITION, *from Adoration to Thanksgiving.*

When we consider the Multitude and Variety of thy Works, and the various Orders of angelic Beings, who, in the most exalted Strains of Devotion, worship before thee, we cannot but cry out, What is Man, that thou art mindful of him.—

When we trace the Foot-steps of thy stupendous Power, Wisdom and Goodness, in the Works of Creation and Providence, and in the Wonders of redeeming Love, shall not our Hearts burn within us? Shall it not lead us to praise thee, with the most pure and fervent Affections of our Souls?

O Lord, raise our Hearts up unto thee, for as thou art the first and greatest, so thou art the best of all Beings.

We may justly esteem it the Glory and Privilege of our Natures, that we are capable of such exalted rational Happiness, as result from the Knowledge, the Worship and Imitation of thee.

The various Instances of thy universal Providence proclaim thy unalienable Right to Worship, and our own Experience of thy Mercies, strongly excite us to come into thy House with Thanksgiving, and enter thy Courts with Praise.

Thy Perfections are not only conspicuous in thy Works, but thy Forbearance towards us; thy Mercies, which are renewed as the Moments of our Lives, demand our most humble and most fervent Thankfulness.

As thy Perfections are more than we can comprehend, so thy Mercies are more than we can number.—Our Souls shall therefore wait on God, for all our Expectations are from thee.

The Works of the Lord are great, and sought out by all that can taste the Pleasures of it.—Our Meditation of thee shall be sweet; we will be glad in the Lord.

We

The Method of PRAYER. 145

We would call upon all the noble and exalted Faculties of our Souls to recognize thy Being and Providence; to magnify thee for the Discoveries of thyself in all thy Works, and more especially that Goodness and Mercy hath followed us all our Lives.

'Tis owing to the constant never-failing Display of thy Goodness, that we still exist amidst such Variety of Pleasures, and the Means of much greater Happiness.

We esteem it our highest Honour, and the Foundation of all our Happiness, that we are permitted to call thee our Father; and our Hope and Joy is confirmed by our Experience of thy paternal Regard and Beneficence towards us.

THANKSGIVING, *for* CREATION.

We acknowledge thee, O Lord, to be the Author of our Beings; the Original and Source of all our Happiness.

Thou, O God, art the Former of our Bodies; the Father of our Spirits; the Preserver of our Lives; and the Author of all our Mercies.

We thank thee, that we have been placed in so noble and elegant a Rank of thy Works, so far superior to the lower Creation, and capable of some Resemblance of thine infinitely glorious Perfections.

We thank God for those Faculties thou didst endow us with, and still continues in their regular Use——for the Advantages we enjoy for their Improvement, and the rational Pleasures which flow from thence.

We bless thee, that thou hast so dignified our Frame, and adorned it with such peculiar Faculties, as enable us to discern, in some Measure, the Harmony and Usefulness of thy Works.

O merciful God, we desire to celebrate thy Goodness, in making us rational Creatures, capable of superior Employment and nobler Pleasures than those below us.

We thank God, that the Members of our Bodies, and all the intellectual Faculties, were given us in due Order, and continued in their proper Use.

L

That

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That we were made capable of viewing the Beauty, Order, Harmony and Design of many of thy Works — of acknowledging the Perfections of the great Author of Nature, and our own Obligations to Gratitude.

That we are fitted by our Natures, for having the Image of thy adorable Perfections enstamped on our Minds, and of being, hereafter, the Objects of thy Complacency.

That thou hast implanted a Consciousness of our Immortality, and confirmed it by indubitable Evidence.

That thou hast called us into Being, on purpose to be the Spectators of thy Works, and the Partakers of thy Beneficence.

That we are rendered capable of the refined and exalted Pleasures of Religion and Virtue, of Society, of Benevolence and Friendship.

That we are capable of joining in those sacred solemn Acts of Devotion; capable of being excited, from the many Instances of thy Goodness, to magnify thy Name.

For P R E S E R V A T I O N.

We adore thee as our constant Preserver and Blessing; thou openest thine Hand wide, and satisfiest the Wants of thy Creatures.

Thou art that supreme Being, who, by the Excellency of thy Nature, extends thy Mercies over all thy Works.

We would be daily thankful to thee for the Support and Accommodation of our Lives; for that Variety that administers to our Delight and Satisfaction, and for all our Hope in thy Mercy.

We praise thee for all the Comforts and Conveniencies of this Life, by whatever Methods they have been conveyed to us.

Surely, Goodness and Mercy hath followed us all the Days of our Lives.

Amidst the various Vicissitudes of this Life, we are surrounded with an Immensity of Love and Mercy. The

The Method of P R A Y E R. 147

The sympathetic Principles implanted in our Natures have ministered to our Satisfaction, from thy Kindness and Beneficence to all the Works of thy Hands.

We have enjoyed a Series of Mercies, not only the Necessaries that support, but the Comforts, which delight our Lives.

Thou spreadest our Table, thou fillest our Cup, and by the Blessing of thy Providence, our Food supports and comforts us.

By thy never-failing Goodness, we are supported—by thy incessant Providence, all our Wants are supplied—by thy continued Favour, we are led to rejoice and to put our Trust in thee.

By thy watchful Providence, we have been skreened from innumerable Evils and Accidents—by thy beneficent Providence, all our returning Wants have been supplied—by thy constant Aid, our Reason and Understanding have been preserved clear and serene, amidst the various disquieting Scenes of Life.

By thy Help, O God, we have continued to this Moment Witnesses of thy indulgent Providence.

Thou art still lengthening our Tranquility, by signal and manifold Deliverances, and by unnumbered Comforts bestowed upon us by thy bountiful and beneficent Hand.

Our Lives are continually supplied and preserved by thy Bounty; O may we devote them sincerely and constantly to thy Service.

We enjoy our Lives, whilst many of our Friends are removed by Death, and their Accounts sealed up unto the Judgment of the great Day.

Thy superintending Care and watchful Providence are evident, in our present Existence, in the Supply of our returning Wants, and in the regular Exercise of those Powers, by which we are conscious of our Alliance to the Father of Spirits.

We thank thee for the Renewings of thy Mercy; as the Morning and the Evening return, thou art our constant Preserver, our Guardian and Benefactor.

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Thou hast watched over our feeble Frames, continued these Bodies in Life, healed their Sickneses and Diseases, and though they are liable to be crushed as a Moth, they still remain Monuments of divine Care.

Through all the Vicissitudes of Time and Nature, thy constant beneficent Providence hath been our Support.

Thou hast dissipated our frequent distressing Fears; thou hast often exceeded our largest Hopes and Expectations: O that Men would praise the Lord for his Goodness, and for his wonderful Acts unto the Children of Men.

Through the Business of the Day, and in the Terrors of the Night, thou hast been nigh to us, as our Friend, our Preserver, and Benefactor—thou hast been at our right Hand, that we have not been greatly moved.

To thine inexhausted Bounty and Benevolence, most gracious God, we are indebted for the Supply of all our Wants.

Thy unseen Hand hath led us safe through all the dangerous Periods of our Existence, and removed our Anxiety, by the seasonable Favours of thy Providence.

To thy unmerited Bounty we owe that Degree of Health we enjoy in our Bodies, the free and regular Exercise of the inward Powers, and Capacities of our Minds.

Thy liberal Hand hath dispensed all the Necessaries, Conveniencies and Comforts we enjoy, to render us easy and chearful in this our State of Trial.

Man is the Darling of thy Providence, and is distinguished by thy Goodness; O may we distinguish ourselves by Gratitude.

But while we reflect on the innumerable Mercies, by which we are incompassed, enlivened and comforted, we would not forget those which relate to our Redemption from Sin and Misery.

For JESUS CHRIST and his GOSPEL.

O Lord, how excellent is thy loving Kindness, how many are thy wonderful Works which thou hast shewed, and how precious are thy Thoughts unto us ward. — When no Eye pitied, when no Hand but thine could save, then was the Time of thy Love, then was infinite Wisdom and universal Goodness displayed by the Advent of thy Son.

We would magnify thee the God of all Compassion, that when Man had violated the sacred Law of his Maker, and exposed himself to divine Displeasure, and when thou might have left his Posterity in their mortal State, thou wert pleased to raise in them the Hopes of Immortality through *Jesus Christ*.

That thou wast pleased to commiserate the State of Mankind, and didst constitute thy Son to be our Lord and Saviour to deliver us from Sin, from Death, and from the Wrath to come; and that through Faith in him we are encouraged to ask and hope for the Pardon of our Sins.

That when we had lost the original Rectitude of our Nature, and consequently the Happiness for which we were designed, God was pleased in great Compassion to us to send his own Son to redeem us, and to recover us to a Capacity of enjoying the Happiness from which we were fallen.

For the inestimable Gift of thy Love, Christ Jesus our Lord, and for the Hope of Salvation, by and thro' him, Glory be to God in the highest.

That thou didst not spare thine own Son, but delivered him up for us all.

That Jesus Christ came into the World to save Sinners, is a Truth we acknowledge worthy of all Acceptation with Thankfulness.

That Jesus Christ is exalted as our Prince and Saviour to give Repentance and Remission of Sins, and that Peace and Reconciliation is proclaimed in his Name.

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We desire to praise thy Name, that in the Fullness of Time and of Grace, thou wast pleased to send thy own Son from Heaven, to restore Mankind to an Imitation of thy Perfections and the Enjoyment of thy Favour.

Glory be to God in the highest.—That of thy essential, unmerited, ineffable Grace, thou didst constitute thy Son, and that he, from filial condescending Duty and boundless Compassion, came into this World to save Sinners.

Blessed be God, even the Father, that when thy intelligent Offspring had perverted the Dictates of Reason and Conscience, and were running on to Destruction, thou didst then out of thy pure unsupplanted Mercy send thy own Son, to restore Mankind to an Imitation of thy moral Perfections, and to the Hopes of thy Favour.

We thankfully acknowledge the Riches of thy Grace, which through Jesus Christ hath laid a solid Foundation for our Hope.

We rejoice in all the glorious Designs of divine Love, we acknowledge they are Designs of the highest Importance, and worthy of all Acceptation to deliver thy reasonable Offspring from Guilt and Condemnation, and to restore them to Virtue and Happiness.

For that most amiable attractive Example which he exhibited in his Life, who was the most adorable and resplendent Image of thine eternal Majesty.

That he set us an Example of inflexible Virtue, amidst all the Difficulties and Trials of an ensnaring World, even unto Death.

That when he ascended up on high he fully evidenced the Divinity of his Mission, and confirmed our Hopes in the Promises of the Gospel, by the miraculous Gifts he conferred on the Apostles.

That in order to confirm and propagate this glorious Gospel, and render its Influence more abundantly successful, thou didst pour out the miraculous Effusion of the Holy Ghost on the Apostles.

That

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That a Person of the highest Dignity and Purity of Character evidenced the Greatness of his Office by a Train of miraculous beneficent Works.

That Grace and Truth, Life and Immortality, is brought to Light by his Gospel, bearing all the internal Characters, and attended with all suitable external Evidence of its divine Authority.

That by the Completion of Prophecies therein, so unquestionably ascertained, we have the fullest Persuasion and Certainty of what the Gospel reveals of a Resurrection to Judgment and Immortality; and that all the Promises of the Gospel will be finally and absolutely accomplished.

That Jesus Christ hath established his Kingdom in this World—That he is constituted the Apostle and High-Priest of our Profession—The Head of all Things to the Church—And the Dispenser of Grace and Favour to all his sincere Votaries.

That his Gospel is so admirably suited to the Constitution and Necessities of human Nature, in its present State, whereby we are led to the Acknowledgment and Love of thee the supreme God, and to a Sense of thy universal Authority.

For the important Doctrines clearly revealed by him —For those excellent Rules of Duty which he exhibited—For those great and precious Promises he made known, and ratified in his Blood—For that amiable, that perfect and godlike Example he hath set us—And for the various Privileges, Ordinances and Benefits we enjoy as Christians.

We admire with Thankfulness the great Design of the Christian Religion to raise in us the heavenly Dispositions of Reverence, Love and Gratitude to God, of Righteousness, Friendship and Benevolence towards one another, and of Humility and Purity of Heart, whereby we may be in some Measure fitted for the Mansions of eternal Blessedness.

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For that pure and uncorrupt Religion which he preached to the World, inforced by proper Sanctions with the clearest Credentials of its Divinity, as agreeable to the Perfections of God, and to the Nature, Circumstances, and Expectations of reasonable Beings.

We thank God that the Gospel has been conveyed down to this Time, that we don't live in a Land where Darknefs, Ignorance and Superstition prevail; but amidst the invaluable Blessings of Gospel Light and Liberty.

Blessed be thy Name, that in this World of Darknefs, Sorrow and Death, Life and Immortality are brought to Light by the Gospel.

That we have the Gospel truly preached, and the Ordinances thereof rightly administered.

We adore the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath abounded towards us in all Wisdom and in all Goodness, by the clear indubitable Evidences of his Mission——By the Spirituality and Importance of his Doctrines——By the Purity and Dignity of his Precepts——By his amiable and godlike Example——By his amazing Compassion and Condescension unto Death——By his triumphant and glorious Resurrection——and by his constant efficacious Intercession for us.

We desire to have a grateful Sense of that unparalleled Love wherewith Christ hath loved us, who descended to our Abode, that we might ascend and dwell with God, who died for us that we might live with him; who became Mortal, that we might put on Immortality.

That he offered up himself a pure and holy, a free and voluntary, a perfect and acceptable Sacrifice unto thee.

We thank God for that great expiatory Sacrifice which he offered up, when he said, It is finished, and then expired on the Cross.

That to the Innocency of his Life, the Sublimity of his Character, the miraculous Proofs of his Mission, he

he added, the Agonies of his Cross, that by his Stripes we might be healed.

That by the glorious Interposition of Jesus Christ, such an Oblation was offered, as was consistent with the Rectitude of thy moral Government, and the State and Circumstances of reasonable intelligent Beings.

That when we could not presume to stand before thee on the Foot of a Covenant of Innocence, we can approach unto thee with Comfort and Joy, on the Terms of the Gospel Covenant, ratified and confirmed by the Blood of Jesus.

That in order to promote our Reconciliation with a justly offended God—in order to accomplish in the most glorious, effectual and triumphant Manner, our Redemption and Salvation, and to bring in everlasting Righteousness, thou didst send thy Son to be a Propitiation for our Sins, that our Faith and Hope might be in thee.

We reflect with Gratitude on that Benevolence and Compassion of Soul, with which he came to do thy Will (that our Chastisement was laid upon him, and through his Stripes we are healed.)

We would for ever be thankful for that ample Provision made for our Restoration and Happiness, so fully displayed in the Gospel, to be accomplished by thy Son Christ Jesus.

That our Reconciliation and Acceptance with God is founded on the glorious Scheme of his Redemption, in his perfect Obedience and Righteousness. — On the Agonies of his Passion. — On the meritorious Sacrifice which he offered. — And on the Efficacy of his Intercession, who we trust ever liveth to make Intercession for us.

That he was made a Sin-offering for us who knew no Sin, that we might be pardoned and treated as righteous before God.

O what Returns of Gratitude shall we make to the holy One of God, thus dying that we might live!

That

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That of thine essential, unsolicited Mercy, thou didst both appoint and accept an Atonement for our Sins by his Death.

We rejoice, that this Method of Atonement thro' the Blood of Jesus Christ was chosen by infinite Wisdom, and is so perfectly consistent with the Purity, the Order and Dignity of thy moral Government.

We reverence and adore that divine Deliverer, who for the Restoration of a degenerate Race, chearfully condescended to lead a Life of unexampled Sorrow, and to suffer a Death overwhelming to every Power of Humanity.

We glorify thy Name, that when in the Riches of thy Grace he had tasted Death for every Man, thou didst honour him by raising him from the Dead, and placing him at thine own Right-hand, that every one might confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the Glory of thee the Father.

That Jesus by his Resurrection hath given us indubitable Evidence of a future State, and that we are enabled to hope, because he liveth, we shall live also; and that whosoever believeth in him, tho' he die, yet shall he live.

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath begotten us unto a Hope of Life and Immortality, by the Resurrection of Jesus Christ, and for all the Consolations afforded us in Christ Jesus.

We adore thee for his glorious Ascension and Exaltation at thy Right-hand in the heavenly Places, far above all Principalities and Powers, and Might, and Dominion.

We rejoice, that when our Lord had accomplished the important, glorious Design, of his Incarnation, he ascended to his Father and our Father, and there ever liveth as our Intercessor with God.

We rejoice in the Views of the far more extensive efficacious and glorious Influences of this perfect Dispensation in this World, when all the Kingdoms thereof shall become the Kingdoms of our Lord Jesus Christ.

—When

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—When Christ shall take to himself his great Power, and reign triumphant by the Prevalence of Truth, Righteousness and Peace in the Earth.

We rejoice still more, that all these Things shall finally conduce to the everlasting Happiness of the Righteous in the Kingdom of God. — And that when all the Designs of the Redeemer's Grace are finally and gloriously accomplished, he shall deliver up the Kingdom to God, even the Father, that God may be all in all.

O that while we are thus expressing Words of Praise and Thankfulness, our Hearts may be warmed with a sincere and ardent Love, a steady Trust in thy supreme Goodness, and Resolutions of better Obedience.

For the Means of Knowledge and Advantages common and extraordinary.

We desire to be thankful for every Opportunity we have of celebrating the glorious Perfections of thy Nature, and of having our Minds improved and animated to an Imitation of thee.

We thank God that we are created rational and moral Agents, capable of a Law and moral Government, and that the Method of thy Providence and Government is with great Wisdom and Goodness suited to our Natures.

That we were created moral and intelligent Beings, capable of participating in the Pleasures of Religion, and for every additional Circumstance of Comfort in our external Situation, conducive to the Improvement of our Minds.

We desire to ascribe Honour and Thanksgiving unto God, for every Assistance and Help to the Knowledge and Practice of our Duty.

We praise thy Name, that we have been called to a Religion, from whence we have received so many and great Advantages, towards answering the End of our Creation, and securing our highest Interest.

We

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We acknowledge 'tis our Happiness, that we are under the Influence of the greatest Motives to Virtue and Religion, from the Hopes of thy Favour, in whose loving Kindness is the Completion of all our Desires.

That, by the Disposition of thy good Providence, or by the Teaching and Example of others, we have been led to a just Sense of the Nature and Importance of Virtue.

That, in some Measure, the Seeds of Goodness have been early implanted in us, and improved by the Example of others, and many peculiar Instances of thy merciful Care and Kindness.

We thank God, that he has given us a Law so exactly conformable to true Reason, and so perfective of human Nature, and that we enjoy many and great Advantages, to engage us to a just Sense of Religion, and those Duties and Obligations it includes.

To thy Goodness we owe our favourable Situation in the World, not so liable and so much exposed to Temptation as many others, and attended with many peculiar Advantages, to guard us against the Alurements of Vice, and to increase our Knowledge and Virtue.

That, by the Disposition of thy good Providence, our Consciences have been duly informed, rendered suitable and proper Monitors to us, and we humbly hope, are under the Influence of thy holy Spirit.

We are favoured with every needful Help, to engage us in the Practice of Virtue and Religion, as rational and moral Agents; as Creatures in a State of Probation, and who are hereafter to be accountable.

We thank God for those clear and abundant Discoveries thou hast been pleased to make of thy glorious Perfections, by the Works of Creation, and by the constant Operations of thy Providence.

We thank God for the Blessings relative to our future and more important Existence; that thy Law has been written on our Hearts, confirmed and improved by the Gospel of our Lord *Jesus Christ*—that we are encouraged

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raged to draw nigh unto thee, as the Judge and Rewarder of Virtue.

Thou hast admitted us to the sacred and solacing Privileges of thine House—givest us frequent Opportunities of having our Duty clearly represented—the gracious Terms of the Gospel candidly proposed, and the Importance of Religion displayed with an attractive Force to our Minds.

Under the many Testimonies of thy great Goodness, we desire to offer the Sacrifice of Praise and Thanksgiving.

We thank thee for the Mercies of the Year past. That, notwithstanding all our Unworthiness, we have not been deprived of the Means of Knowledge and Happiness.

In the Multitude of thy Mercies, we are brought to the Beginning of another Year, through many Intervals of Danger and Distress; and by many new and signal Blessings, as well as many continued Favours, thou hast excited our Gratitude, Joy and Confidence—thy Corn, Wine and Oil hath supported and cheered us—thy Wool and thy Flax hath cloathed us—thou hast eased our Pains—removed our Sicknefs—dissipated our Fears—comforted us when dejected, and raised us up Friends to soften the Cares, to improve the Pleasures, and heighten the Blessings and Joys of Life—we have enjoyed a great Measure of Health—(our Intervals of Affliction have been short and gentle, the Chastisement of an indulgent Father, for the Improvement of our Virtue)—thy Providence has succeeded our lawful Concerns—watched over and blessed our Children and Friends*.

Through the same Goodness we were born in a Christian Land—of religious Parents—instructed early in the Principles and Motives of true Religion—these were enforced by their Example—we have enjoyed many public and private Opportunities for Improvement

* These Expressions are to be varied as Circumstances require.

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ment—frequent Seasons for joining in the public Worship and Ordinances of the Gospel—many peculiar Advantages we have enjoyed, arising from our Constitution, Situation, and easy Circumstances of Life, and as connected with others, by the Dispensations of thy Providence. Lord, what shall we render unto thee for thy Mercies.

We have been, by the Disposition of thy Providence, like Trees planted by the Rivers of Water. O that we had brought forth Fruit, in the expected Season, suitable to our Obligations.

Notwithstanding we are conscious of many Transgressions, we have Reason to acknowledge thy restraining, thy preventing Goodness—whilst others have been cut off in their Iniquities, we have been distinguished by thy long Suffering and Patience—thy Grace has been often seasonable, and often adequate to our Trials. —Blessed be God for Assistance in Time of Difficulty; for Succour and Presence of Mind under Temptation, that we have been often guarded and kept from falling into Sin and the Misery consequent of it—that we have not fallen into enormous Vices—that we have not run into the same Excess of Vice as many others—that good Thoughts have been suggested to our Minds, pious Resolutions begotten and confirmed, good Desires awakened and impressed, Virtue in its amiable and attractive Nature, and Vice in its native Deformity, so clearly represented to our Understanding, that our Wills have been, in a good Measure, influenced by it; that we are conscious, in all these happy Effects, thy good Spirit hath performed its beneficent Offices. Lord, impress a Sense of Gratitude, more and more, on our Minds.

THANKSGIVINGS *adapted to the Morning.*

O our Father, our Guardian and Benefactor! we desire, from the fullest Conviction of our Duty, to offer up our Morning Sacrifice of Praise.

Inspired

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Inspired by the renewed Instances of thy Goodness, we would devote our Morning Tribute of Thanks to him that hath supported, guarded and comforted us the Night past.

Blessed art thou, O Lord our God, to whom belongeth the Issues of Life and Death——that we have been preserved the Night past, whilst many others have slept the Sleep of Death——that we enjoy Health whilst many are languishing with Pain and Sickness.——We are in the proper Use of our Senses, whilst others deplore the Want of them; and in the regular Exercise of our reasonable Powers and Capacities, when many are deprived of them, and perhaps insensible of their Loss.

That when immersed in the Insensibility of Sleep—and lost in a confused Labyrinth of Dreams——thy guardian Hand roused us from the temporary Lethargy—strung our Limbs with recruiting Vigour——revived the chearful pleasing Exercise of our Senses—awakened our Thoughts to Contemplation—refitted us for the Duties of our respective Stations, and capacitated us to relish the innocent Entertainments of our animal Nature, to enjoy the sublime Pleasure of our rational Capacities —— and still continuest all those valuable Privileges, which are suited to promote our most important Interests.

Through the gloomy Shades of Night, in our most unguarded Hours, we have been preserved and refreshed by undisturbed Repose.——No distressing Accident has befallen us, nor midnight Outcry alarmed us —We laid ourselves down to rest, and thou O Lord sustainedst us.

Accept, O Lord, our Acknowledgements for the Mercies of the Night past, for the comfortable Repose we have had, and that we are favoured with the Light of another Day.—That we have renewed Obligations by the Supply of our returning Wants to offer up our Tribute of Praise.

We

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We thank God that our Families, our dearest Friends and nearest Relations have likewise partook of thy Favours.

That we are rendered capable of appearing before thee this Morning with Capacities to offer up a reasonable Service. Lord beget a suitable Disposition, and accept our Thanksgivings.

T H A N K S G I V I N G S *adapted to the Evening.*

Whilst Creatures of inferior Rank are unconscious of their Benefactor, we rejoice in the Pleasure of viewing thy Goodness, renewed as the Moments of our Lives.

Surely Goodness and Mercy hath followed us this Day — freed us from all sad Accidents and calamitous Events — from external Injury, and from internal Pain and Distress — guarded our Outgoings, that we have passed unhurt amidst a Variety of unseen Evils — prospered our lawful Undertakings, and crowned us this Day with loving Kindness and tender Mercy.

We thank God for the Blessings of every Day — that we have been sustained in Life, in Health, and Ease. — That we enjoy not only the necessary Supports, but many of the Comforts of Life. — That we are in the Enjoyment of Plenty of Peace and Liberty. — Thy Mercies are more than we can number, and infinitely more than we can deserve.

Thy unwearied Munificence hath spread our Table, furnished it with the finest Wheat, and replenished it with the choicest of thy Gifts, while Temperance hath sweetened the Bowl, Appetite hath seasoned the Dish, Contentment and Gratitude have crowned the Repast.

O thou Guardian of our Happiness, whilst thy Providence hath liberally supplied our Wants, we trust thou hast been at our Right-hand, so that we have not been greatly moved. — (Through thy gracious Assistance we have escaped many Temptations to which we have been exposed.) — Thou hast been our Helper

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Helper in all the busy Scenes of the Day ; therefore under the Shadow of thy Wing will we repose ourselves in the dark and lonely Shades of the Night.—To thee would we refer and resign our most important Interest, and lye down with a chearful Serenity and Composure, in Confidence of thy Mercy; that all thy Dispensations towards us will be in Wisdom and Goodness.

TRANSITION *from* THANKSGIVING to CONFESS I O N.

Thy Mercies are sufficient to lead us to our Duty, and engage us to be happy.—But we have not been suitably affected and influenced by them.

We are every where surrounded by thy Goodness, and yet live without that Gratitude of Mind and dutiful Behaviour which becomes us.

Thou created us innocent, rational and free Beings, but we have rendered ourselves guilty by abusing our Liberty, and neglecting the true Use and Improvement of our Reason.

We share plentifully in thy Mercies ; but alas ! the very Gifts which thou bestowest do so employ our Minds, that they hinder us from remembering the Hand from whence they flow.

We behold thy Care and Compassion and Lenity towards us, notwithstanding our many Frailties, Infirmities and Provocations.

From thee we deriye every valuable Blessing we enjoy, yet, O Lord, they have not had a suitable Impression on our Minds, nor suitable Influence on our Lives.

We have often had our Duty and our Interest exhibited in the clearest Light, yet are too unmindful of those Things that are of the highest Importance to us.

Thou madest Man upright, but he have sought out many Inventions.

M

Where-

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Wherewithal shall we come before God and bow ourselves before the most high; we have sinned, what shall we do, O thou Preserver of Men?

We are justly ashamed at the Folly and Ingratitude of neglecting to worship that God that made us, and so lightly esteeming the Rock of our Salvation.

Who of us can say I have made my Heart clean, I am free from Sin?

If we justify ourselves our own Mouth shall condemn us; if we say we are perfect, it shall prove us perverse.

We have great Reason, O God, with Shame and Remorse, and the deepest Contrition, to confess before thee our many and aggravated Sins.

We acknowledge we are bound by all the Ties of Duty and Interest to render unto thee the most perfect Services of our Lives, as Creatures constantly under thine Inspection, and to whom we must be hereafter accountable.

Thou hast declared it to be the essential and immutable Perfection of thy Nature, to forgive Iniquity, Transgression and Sin — To this Clemency of thy Nature we desire to make our humble Addresses — We would take with us Words and say, Father, we have sinned against Heaven, and in thy Sight.

Wherewith could such frail sinful Creatures present ourselves before thee, so as to offer an acceptable Sacrifice, had not thy condescending Grace assured us, that to this Man thou wilt look, that is of an humble and a contrite Spirit.

Whilst we thus recognize thy Being and Perfections, and profess that our Obligations to thy supreme Goodness are infinite, we desire to take Shame to ourselves, that our Hearts have been no more affected with it, nor our Actions no more consistent and expressive of it.

When we consider the matchless Purity of thy Nature—the Holiness of thy Laws, and our many Obligations to Obedience, we are struck with Confusion at the Remembrance of our Transgressions and Ingratitude.

C H A P.

C H A P. IV.

C O N F E S S I O N.

O Lord, we desire with the deepest Contrition of Soul to acknowledge our Sins and our Follies.

We have sinned by transgressing thy righteous Laws, and debased the Excellency of our Nature.

We have come far short of those Degrees in Virtue which thou hast rendered us capable of, and which the many and special Favours we enjoy should oblige us to.

We would bewail the Prevalency of Temptation over us, the Weakness of our Resolutions, and the Vices that most easily beset us.

Our Sins were many before we professed to know God, and our Duty to him; but alas! they have been very much multiplied and aggravated since.

How much of Pride, Passion, Carnality, and other sinful Passions are predominant in us?

How much of Anger, Impatience and Revenge cleave to us, whereby our Affections are too often placed on Things that deserve our Abhorrence?

Alas! how cold our Love to God, how slow our Advances in Religion, suitable to the Advantages we enjoy, and the Obligations we are under.

We would acknowledge the Stubbornness of our Wills and Tempers, and the Vices most incident to our Constitution, all those secret Seeds of Iniquity that are ever bringing forth Vanity, Folly and Guilt.

We have too much followed the Desires of our Hearts, and indulged our Passions and Appetites in Opposition to Reason and Conscience.

We would complain before thee, O Lord, that the World by its Pleasures and Snares continually besets us, strikes on all our Senses, ingrosses our Faculties, and alienates our Affections from God and Religion.

Oh, Lord! how little is our Acquaintance with thee, how very short and full of Imperfections the Seasons of our Communion with thee.

We have had sad Experience of our Frailty by often falling by small Temptations, even by those we have resolved to withstand.

Our Sins witness against us, our too frequent Omission of Duty, and our Imperfections too plainly testify we have not had a constant, awful Sense of thy Perfections on our Minds.

We have not made such Improvement of the Talents committed to our Trust, as thou hast required and justly expected from us.

We acknowledge we are capable of arriving at much higher Impressions of God and divine Things, than we ordinarily feel.

We have not rendered to God that Love, Gratitude and Obedience due to his absolute and universal Goodness, nor have we been wisely solicitous about obtaining his Favour.

How little do we feel of divine Love, of holy Desires, of devout Affections and of heavenly Joy.

We acknowledge, O Lord, that every Deviation from the Law which thou hast written in our Hearts is repugnant to the Nature, and to the Happiness of our Beings.

How many Imperfections and Frailties still attend us, which too often draw us aside——How forgetful are we of thy Goodness!——How little sensible of our increasing Obligations!

How vain are our Thoughts——How irregular our Affections——How eager and impatient are our Desires of present Things, in the Neglect of our Duty, and proper Improvement of the Advantages we enjoy.

How irregular our Tempers——How earthly our Affections——How eager our Desires and Pursuits after worldly Good, and how negligent in that great and important Work for which we were intended!

How

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How little of this short and fleeting Life is spent for the securing a happy Eternity!—How many of our Days witness to our Neglect and Forgetfulness of thee!

How little of Gratitude do we find rise within us, on the Consciousness of continued Mercies, or of any remarkable Instances of thy Providence in our Favour.

We are justly ashamed of our Unprofitableness, of our Unfruitfulness, that our Goodness has so often been like the Morning Cloud, and like the early Dew that soon passeth away.

O thou worthy Object of our Contemplation and Love, how imperfect are our Views of thy infinite Perfection and Glory!

How little do we exercise that Adoration and Praise, that Love and Confidence, which are indispensibly due unto thee from Creatures so dependent and highly favoured by thee!

How manifest is the Disorder of all the Powers of our Souls, that the transitory Pleasures, Riches and Honours of this vain World strike upon our Imagination, employ our Understanding and captivate our Wills, whilst thy perfect Excellence and unbounded Benevolence, are disregarded or thought of with Coldness and Indifference!

We have rather made Choice of this World as our Portion, while the Love of God hath had no Place in our Hearts, nor made any suitable Impressions on our Minds!

How weak are our Resolutions, how often indisposed for the Performance of our religious Duties, or to taste the Pleasures that would otherwise flow from thence, and how faint and languid are our Hopes!

We have virtually denied thee in our moral Conduct, and have left undone the Things which we are conscious our Duty and our truest Interest required.

We have oftentimes been guilty of such inexcusable Ingratitude, as to lie down and rise up without acknowledging the Hand that constantly supports us. —

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Though thou hast presented to our View the great Frame of Nature——tho' thou hast placed us in Apartments of this World to view thy Works, and partake of thy Munificence——though thou hast given us organized Bodies, and placed a noble Inhabitant within us——and hast also abounded towards us by affording us the clearest Revelation of thy Will by Jesus Christ: Yet alas! all these various and striking Manifestations of thyself make but very feeble and transient Impressions upon our Hearts.

We desire to humble ourselves for our Omissions of social and relative Duties.

O Lord, we are conscious to ourselves that our Affections to our Fellow-Creatures are weak and limited——Frequently interrupted, and sometimes overcome by the Prevalence of selfish and interested Passions.

Confession of the AGGRAVATIONS of SIN.

O Father, we have sinned against the express Declaration of thy Word, as well as against the Conviction of our Consciences.

We acknowledge not only that we have done those Things thou hast expressly forbidden, but even our best Services have been attended with so many Imperfections, that we have Reason to implore thy Forgiveness of them.

We confess that the Concerns, the Interests and Pleasures of this Life, make too strong Impressions on our Minds, and engross that Affection which ought to be placed ultimately on God.

We have sinned against the Conviction of our own Minds of thy Being, Presence and Government——Against the Law which thou hast written in our Hearts——Against the peculiarly sacred Obligations of our holy Profession——and against the Dignity, Honour and Happiness of our immortal Souls.

The God in whose Hands our Lives and Breath is have we not glorified.

O Lord,

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O Lord, we have sinned against Heaven and in thy Sight, and are not worthy to be called thy Children.

We have sinned against thy Mercies, against the Rebukes and Warnings of thy Word and Providence, and the frequent Checks of our Consciences.

We have better known thy Will, and have enjoyed greater Advantages, than many who have exceeded us in Virtue and Piety.

We have sinned against much Light and Conviction, frequent Profession and Resolution, and many peculiar Instances of thy merciful Care and Kindness.

We have virtually denied thee, in our Conduct, as the supreme Governor of the moral World.

Innumerable are our Offences, committed many Times against the clearest Light and strongest Love—against the Remonstrances of our own Minds, the Authority of thy Law, and the Sanction of Rewards and Punishments.

We have sinned against the best of Beings—We have not properly attended to the Councils of most perfect Wisdom, and have neglected the Abilities and Advantages which thy Bounty hath mercifully bestowed.

We have offended against thee our Creator and Father, our constant Benefactor, our supreme and righteous Governor.

We have violated thy sacred Laws, affronted thy sovereign Authority, acted unsuitable to our reasonable Nature, and to our high Character and Hopes as Christians.

We have sinned against Heaven and before thee, before thine omniscience, immaculate Purity and Justice.

We acknowledge, O Lord, we have exposed ourselves to thy Displeasure, and to the Effects of thy vindictive Justice.

We have so far multiplied our Sins against God, that we have Reason to doubt of our final Acceptance with thee.

TRANSITION *from* CONFESSION *to* PETITION.

Yet thou hast been pleased to encourage our Hope, by assuring us thou retainest not thine Anger for ever, because thou delightest in Mercy.

Our Hope and Confidence is in thine infinite Mercy; for thou hast proclaimed thy Name, the Lord, the Lord God gracious and merciful, abundant in Goodness, forgiving Iniquity, Transgression and Sin.

Through the Propitiousness of thy Nature, thou hast consecrated a Way for our Access with Acceptance, in that Way we desire now to make our Application for that Mercy we need.

C H A P. V.

Of PETITION:

That we may truly repent of our Sins, and obtain Forgiveness of them.

GIVE us, O Lord, Repentance for all the Errors of our past Lives.

O Lord, we desire to have the deepest Contrition of Soul, from the Sense of our repeated Transgressions.

O Lord, beget in us such a sincere and genuine Repentance for our past Sins as may effectually renew us from Sin to Virtue.

Wherein, O Lord, we have erred, let the gracious Influences of thy Spirit excite us to Repentance, and engage us to rectify our Conduct.

O merciful God, we intreat thy pardoning Mercy, with Resolution of greater Circumspection for the future. Lord, succeed our Resolutions by thy gracious Assistance.

Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering and abundant in Goodness, forgive our innumerable Follies and Transgressions—Deliver us from the dreadful Consequences of them, and give us the most vigorous Resolutions of Amendment.

Be

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Be merciful to us, O God ; be merciful unto us according to thy loving Kindness ; according to thine essential unchangable Mercy, blot out all our Transgressions.

We would implore thy Forgiveness, on the Terms of the Gospel, through Repentance and Faith.

We beg that we may be interested in the important Promises and Blessings of the Gospel—That our Iniquities may be forgiven, and our Sins pardoned.

We would come as humble Supplicants, intreating for thy Mercy, through *Christ Jesus*.

O that the compleat and perfect Salvation, which he hath wrought out for us, may be dear and welcome to our Souls !

As we confess our Sins before thee, and become humble and penitent, Lord justify us freely by thy Grace, through the Mediation of thy Son.

We come to the Throne of thy Grace, to intreat thy Mercy in the Pardon of all our Sins, and Grace to help us in every Time of Need.

We acknowledge our Need of Mercy ; let us shew ourselves the Objects of that Mercy, by forgiving all that have trespassed against us.

Thy pardoning Mercy, through *Jesus Christ*, is the first and most important Request of our Souls.

We are conscious of our Guilt, and would most ardently seek thy Favour. Lord dispose our Minds to perform the Conditions of thy Forgiveness.

Under the most striking and affecting Sense of our Sins, we implore thy Mercy, though we have nothing to plead but the Riches of thy Mercy ; Lord justify us freely by thy Grace.

And may our Repentance be acceptable in thy Sight, and our Sins be forgiven, even as we hope we can sincerely say, that we do forgive all that have offended or trespassed against us.

A Profession of our Desire of divine Assistance, and of our Dependence on it in Conjunction with our natural Abilities.

And being reconciled unto God, and desirous of continuing in thy Favour, we would come to thee as the Source of our Help, as well as of our Hope.

O gracious God, who giveth to all Men liberally and upbraidest not, establish and strengthen us in the wisest and best Purposes.

May a Sense of our own Inability lead us to thee our God, as our Help and our Support, as the Aid of our Minds in the important Concerns of Religion.

Whatever Experience we may have of divine Light and divine Grace wrought in our Souls, may we attribute all to the Glory of God, the Source of all Excellence.

As we experience the Frailty of our Natures, the Weakness of our Resolutions, and the Prevalency of Temptation, we would not rely on our own Strength, but implore thy gracious Assistance.

We would come as humble and dependent Creatures, intreating that our Sins may be forgiven, that whatever is amiss in us may be rectified, that our Passions and Appetites may be brought under the Guidance of Reason and Conscience, and that we may have Grace to help us in every Time of Need.

Sensible of our own Weakness and Insufficiency for the important Duties of Religion, we humbly implore thine Assistance. Preserve us by thine omnipotent Power, direct us by thine infallible Wisdom, in the Way we should go.

We humbly intreat we may be effectually supported and assisted in the Exertion of our noblest Powers in thy Service.

Look down in much Mercy upon thy frail and erring Creatures, make such Impressions on our Minds

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as may lead us to Reflection ; — and may convince us of the indispenſible Obligations to Religion and Virtue.

Let thy bleſſed Spirit dwell in our Hearts, and under its ſanctifying Operations may we be made Partakers of the divine Nature.

That we may have a juſt Senſe of the Nature and Conſequences of Sin.

May we always remember the inherent Baſeneſs of Vice, and the Miſery inſeparable from it.

May a Senſe of the Unreaſonableneſs and Turpitude of Vice be conſtantly remembered by us.

May we conſider Sin as inconfiſtent with the Rectitude of thy Nature—as debaſing our original Excellence—as contrary to the Dictates of our Conſciences, and deſtructive of our preſent and future Happineſs.

May we reflect frequently on the Malignity and Deformity of Vice, as a Stain to our Reaſon, and the loweſt Debaſement of our Natures — as perverting that beautiful Order thou haſt implanted in the Creation—as deſtroying that Perfection and Happineſs among reaſonable Beings, for which they were originally formed — as a Contrariety to thy pure and ſpotleſs Excellence—an Affront to thy ſupreme Authority—and as Ingratitude to the beſt of Beings.

May we carry our Thoughts to the Nature and Reſult of every Action, conſider its more diſtant, as well as its more immediate Effects, that we may eſchew Evil and do Good, that ſo Satisfaction and Happineſs may be the Reſult of our Conduct.

Lord aſſiſt us in recollecting our paſt Miſcarriages, and impreſs on our Minds a juſt Senſe of our Folly and Guilt, that it may diſpoſe us to Humility, and to greater Care and Watchfulneſs for the future.

Whatever moral Imperfection there is in us—whatever darling Vice cleaves to us, the Lord help us to diſcover and to forſake.

May we know more of ourſelves, of our own Weakneſs and Frailty, Folly and Guilt.

Help

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Help us to understand our Errors, and cleanse us, O God, from all our Sins.

We would not only be sensible of our Sin, but we would confess it, be humble for, and desire to forsake it.

Give us to know our own Hearts and Character in the most genuine Light.

Help us to recollect our multiplied and highly aggravated Sins, whereby we have laid such Foundation for Sorrow and Remorse of Soul, from the just Apprehension of thy Displeasure.

For a Sense of the real Excellence and Importance of Religion, and a true Taste and Relish for it.

May our Hearts be smitten with the Love of Truth and Goodness, as of essential and immutable Obligation.

May we know and remember that the Love and Fear of God, and that Justice and Mercy towards Men, are Duties founded in the Nature of Things, and immutably good in themselves.

May we have a just Sense and Esteem of all the Duties of Religion, as being in their own Nature truly valuable, and wisely calculated to promote the most solid and lasting Happiness.

May we remember that upright and religious Dispositions are delightful in themselves, and attended with the most comfortable and happy Effects.

May we cultivate in our Minds such a Love of Virtue, as may render the Practice of it easy and familiar to us.

Let us shew that we have improved our Notions of Morality, by an exemplary Piety, and Regularity of Conduct, and in becoming such Ornaments to Religion as will recommend it to others.

May we prefer the Pleasures of the Understanding, that enoble our Frame infinitely beyond the unsatisfying Pleasures of Sense.

O thou

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O thou, who hast formed us for the Purposes of Virtue and Religion! convince us of the Importance of them, as we would answer the End of our Creation, and secure our highest and most lasting Interest.

For the Improvement of our Knowledge.

May we know more of God, and of ourselves, and more of the Grace of God, through *Jesus Christ* our Lord.

O thou, whose all powerful Word didst at first command Light to arise, assist our sincere and humble Enquiries.

May we, according to our several Powers and Advantages in Life, steadily Pursue and endeavour to excel in useful Knowledge.

Assist us, O God, by all the Methods of thy Providence, in perfecting our Minds in all that is truly excellent.

May the God of our Lord *Jesus Christ*, the Father of Glory, give unto us the Spirit of Wisdom and Revelation in the Knowledge of him——May we be filled with the Knowledge of thy Will in all Wisdom and spiritual Understanding.

May we hear the Voice of Reason and Conscience, and attend to the sacred Dictates of thy Spirit.

The little we know of thee raises our Admiration. Lord enlarge our Capacities, and give us still more noble and just Ideas of thy Power, Wisdom and Goodness, the great Original and Pattern of all moral Excellence.

Lord teach us more of that sublime and most consolating Knowledge, the Knowledge of thy Perfections, of thy Will and Laws.

May we prefer the Pleasures of the Understanding, which enoble our Frame infinitely beyond the unworthy, unsatisfying and fleeting Satisfactions of Sense.

May we look upon wilful Ignorance as the Soul's Nakedness and Shame——as the Corruption of our Prin_{ci}

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Principles—as the Bane of our Virtues, and our greatest Infelicity.

That our Faith may be rational, lively and influencing.

Increase our Faith, that it may be a living, powerful Principle of Action.

Increase our Faith in Proportion to the Greatness of the Objects of it, and the Evidence we have for the Truth of them.

May our Faith be directed and established by a deliberate, impartial Enquiry, conformable to the Dictates of thy Word.

Lord preside over, and direct our Enquiries in such a Manner, that we may be preserved from every fatal Error, and led to discern all those genuine Truths that are of Importance to our Happiness.

As we profess our Faith in thy divine Perfections, and in *Jesus Christ* thy Son, in all his Characters and Offices, we pray that we may be assisted to maintain this Faith, in a lively influencing Exercise, that may be to our everlasting Consolation.

May the Trial of our Faith be found unto Praise, and Honour and Glory, at the appearing of *Jesus Christ*, whom though we have not seen, we love, and in whom we rejoice with Joy unspeakable and full of Glory.

May Faith realise to our View the Joys of the future invisible World, and animate us with Resolution to seek that City whose Builder and Maker is God.

That we may have a just Sense of the divine Perfections, and a Regard to the moral Government of GOD.

May we always cultivate the most rational and honourable Conceptions of thy Perfections and of the Conduct of thy Providence.

May we never represent thee to our Minds as an arbitrary and partial Being, as the Dread and Terror of Mankind; but as that Being, whose Requirements are intended for the Comfort, Joy and Happiness of thine intelligent Creation.

Mey

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May we have such a just and influencing Sense of thy supreme Perfection ; of the spotless Purity of thy Nature ; of thy Omniscience and universal Providence, and of thine impartial Justice, as may dispose us acceptably to worship thee.

May we be inspired with such just and worthy Sentiments of thee, our God, as may always animate us to worship thee with sincere and ardent Affection, to acquiesce in thy Providence—cheerfully to obey thy Commands, and according to our Measure and Capacities, to be perfect as our heavenly Father is perfect.

May we call no Man Father upon Earth ; but acknowledging thy supreme Authority, may we yield a filial, uniform Obedience to all thy Requirements.

May we discover by a cheerful, uniform Obedience to thy Will, that we esteem thy Laws to be equitable, and thy Rewards munificent and glorious.

May we maintain on our Minds such a Veneration and Esteem of thy Perfections, as may more powerfully influence us than Principles of Fear and Terror.

We would pray for a Temper wholly resigned to the all-wise Disposals of thy Providence, and for a Disposition to improve every Dispensation.

Establish our Souls in such a firm Persuasion of the infinite Wisdom and Goodness of thy universal and beneficent Providence, as shall engage us to refer our most important Concerns to thee with an entire Confidence on thy Care——We shall be kept in perfect Peace when our Minds are stayed on thee.

May we have such a Knowledge of God, as may purify and elevate our Hearts, and make us Partakers of the divine Nature.

Above all, we pray that the increasing Knowledge of our Minds may produce suitable Degrees of inward Refinement and moral Rectitude.

O thou first and greatest of all Beings ! we humbly pray, that thou wilt illuminate our Understandings in all important and useful Knowledge.

As

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As the just Foundation of all religious Duty and Service, may we cultivate the most exalted and honourable Apprehensions of thy Perfections, Providence, and moral Government.

In the serious frequent Contemplation on the glorious Attributes of thy Nature, may our Hearts be inspired with the most animating Principles of Religion.

May we sanctify thee in our Hearts, and make thee the Object of our supreme Reverence and Veneration.

O thou one eternal immutable Source of Being and Happiness, we desire to have all our Wishes and Hopes centre in thee, and all the Powers and Capacities of our Natures consecrated to thy Service.

O God, whilst we contemplate thy Eternity and incommunicable Perfections, suffer us not to bewilder ourselves in bold and vain Conjectures beyond the utmost Scope of our Reason; but may we be content with the Discoveries thou hast made of thyself—Rejoice in this, that thou art good, and steadily pursue the great End of our Beings.

Let us not degrade thy transcendent incomprehensible Majesty, by imagining that any Thing in Heaven, or on Earth, can be likened unto thee; but may we make thee the Object of our highest Reverence, of our supreme Love and Adoration, and let our Hope and Joy ultimately centre in thee.

Imprest with an awful Sense of thine infinite Greatness and boundless Dominion, may we prostrate ourselves with the lowest Abasement, and maintain the most unfeigned Humility before thee, as Creatures dependent, imperfect and guilty.

In the Consciousness of thy supreme irresistible Power, may we never dishonour this thy Perogative, by imagining any Thing impossible with thee consistent with perfect Rectitude and Beneficence; but that thou art indeed the Rock of Ages, the Support of universal Nature, and the Joy of all thy rational Creatures.

Let the Belief and Contemplation of thine unsearchable Wisdom influence our Minds to an Acquiescence and

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and Trust in thy Providence, and to a reverent Vindication of the Ways of God to Man, however eclipsed by some external Circumstances.

Verily this is the Message that we have heard by the Voice of Nature and Providence, and which we ourselves have particularly experienced that God is Love—And we most devoutly pray, that an efficacious Sense of thy Goodness may remain upon our Hearts, and be a Principle of chearful Obedience to thy Will.

We would contemplate with Gratitude, thy Patience and long Suffering. O may we never abuse thy propitious indulging Mercy, by Continuance in Sin; but may our unfeigned Repentance and devout Obedience express the Sincerity of our Gratitude.

Naked and open as all our Thoughts, Designs and Actions are to thee, and subject to thy righteous Judgment: Let Purity of Thought, and Regularity of Conduct never forsake us.

May we live under the Impression of this Truth, that no Disguises can escape thy Notice; that all Hypocrisy is vain before thee; that the Darkness and the Light are both alike unto thee.

May we ever act as conscious of thy great Presence, as remembering thou art now the Witness, who will hereafter be the Judge of our Actions.

Being fully persuaded of thine essential, unalterable Regard to Truth and Righteousness, may our Integrity remain uncorrupt and unshaken from the Influence of Appetite and Passion, the Prevalence of Example, or any other Temptation whatsoever.

Influenced be the Evidences of thy Truth and Faithfulness, may we repose an unshaken Trust and Confidence in thy Promises, and in Imitation of this immutable Perfection of thy Nature; may Truth, Integrity and Uprightness be the Basis of all our Transactions.

In the fullest Conviction that thou art unchangeable in all the Perfections of thy Nature, whereby thou art the everlasting Source of Happiness to all

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thine intelligent Offspring, we would with the utmost Ardour and devout Affection of our Souls say, Whom have we in Heaven but thee, and there is none upon Earth we desire in Comparison of thee.

May we have such a lively Sense of all thy Perfections, as to love thee with all our Hearts, to worship thee with the most pure and unaffected Devotion, to be ever thankful unto thee, and always solicitous to please thee.

In the Contemplation of thee, O God, may we attain to high Degrees of Esteem, Adoration, Love and Joy.

O that God may be in all our Thoughts ! May we make thy Perfections the Rule of our Conduct, and from thence derive the most influencing Motives.

Impress on our Minds an awful Sense of thy Majesty, that it may engage us to an habitual Seriousness;

May we cultivate in our Minds a just Idea of thy Providence, a reverent and devout Esteem of thy Perfections, and an ardent Desire to imitate them.

Let the Honour of God, the Credit of Religion, and the Good of Mankind, be the ruling Principles of our Breast, making every private Interest subservient to this our highest Duty.

May the Love of God and Goodness be predominant over all the Powers and Faculties of our Souls.

May we cultivate a cheerful and thankful Acquiescence in thy Providence, acknowledging the Justice, the Wisdom, and the Goodness of thy Dealings with us, in the Shortness and Uncertainty of Life, and in the Evils that frequently attend them.

Deal with us according to thine own Will, for thou wilt nothing but what is good for us ; whether it is Health, or Sickness, Pleasure or Pain ; teach us always to be resigned to thy Will.

Let not any of the adverse Occurrences of Life make us dejected and despairing, but let us be quickened in our Aspirings after, and Preparations for a Happiness that is more exalted and durable.

Im-

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Impress on our Minds an habitual Reverence and Love of thy Majesty.

Let the Remembrance of thy Presence so possess our Minds, that we may act as under the Eye of our supreme Governor and Judge.

Impress on our Minds a Sense of thine awful, supreme Perfections, that those Temptations which too easily beset us, and have too often rendered our Passions irregular, may lose their Power over us.

May the Contemplation of thy most amiable and glorious Perfections, engage us to recommend ourselves to thy Favour by an Imitation of them.

Let us shew that we understand our Relation to thee the supreme Being, and have a becoming Sense of thine infinite Perfections, by an humble and affectionate Veneration of thee, a calm and absolute Submission to thy Providence, and all the just Expressions of a genuine unaffected Piety.

May we cultivate in our Minds a constant Reverence and Love of thy Majesty, who art the most excellent of all Beings, and may we delight in thee as the Source of all Good.

Impress on our Minds a more awful Veneration of thee, the great, original and universal Source of Life and Comfort.

Let the Consideration of thine Omniscience fix our Hearts a-right, and preserve in us an habitual Regard to thee, and Fear of offending thee.

We would aspire after that Perfection that is most worthy. O when shall we be able to direct our Imitation, by thy most perfect Excellence; O Father, assist us, whom thou hast formed in some Measure capable thereof.

Let thy Will, which is always founded in consummate Perfection, bound all our Desires, and regulate every Passion.

We pray that the increasing Knowledge of God may produce higher Degrees of Love, Delight, and Joy in thee.

PETITION *founded on, or resulting from our Profession as Christians.*

May we esteem the Doctrines of the Gospel the Rule of our Faith, and our Saviour's perfect Example the Rule of our Practice; being fully persuaded, that the Virtues of his Life will be the highest Ornament of ours.

May we remember that Repentance towards God, and Faith in our Lord *Jesus Christ*, are made the Terms of our Acceptance.

May we live by Faith in the Son of God, under its constant Guidance and suitable Influence.

May our Faith in *Jesus Christ* inspire us with Love towards him, and may we rejoice that we are interested in his Grace.

May our Esteem of the Christian Religion be suitable to our Evidence of its Truth, and our Practice be answerable to our Consciousness of its Excellency, and the Hopes we entertain from it.

May we esteem it our Honour and our Privilege to be Christians, so as to fix our Hopes, our Desires, and Confidence in God, through *Jesus Christ*, and may we feel more of the Power and Energy of Religion on our Minds.

May the God of our Lord *Jesus Christ* grant unto us, that Christ may dwell in our Hearts by Faith, and create us a new in him.

Let the holy Precepts of that perfect Institution, by which we profess to be guided, and the Example of that great Master whom we profess to follow, have a powerful and lasting Influence on our whole Conduct.

O that God would fulfil in us the good Pleasure of his Will, and the Work and Fruits of Faith.

May we live in the delightful Contemplation of the divine Scheme of our Salvation, that it may be a Means of raising us to high Degrees of Piety and Virtue.

May

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May the Kingdom of our Lord *Jesus Christ* come in its Power and Efficacy in our Hearts. To renew and disengage us from all Vice and Folly—to increase our Knowledge and Piety—to improve, exalt and refine our Natures to the highest Resemblance of himself.

May it never be our Condemnation, that this glorious Light has diffused its beneficent Rays around us, and that we have never been animated by its Influence to Virtue and Religion.

That we may be suitably influenced by the Example of
CHRIST.

May we keep the Example of *Christ* habitually in our View, and may those Virtues which shone so conspicuously in his Life, be the Ornament of ours.

As we call ourselves the Disciples and the Followers of the blessed Jesus, may we endeavour to copy his Example; and as we say we abide in him, may we walk even as he walked.

May we endeavour after a Conformity of Temper and Disposition to our great Pattern, which will dignify our Natures, and give the surest Title to the Glory thou hast promised.

Oh may we copy the Example of *Christ* in his inward, ardent, elevated, uninterrupted Piety, in his entire, unreserved Submission to thy Will, and in his constant Delight to do Good, both to the Souls and Bodies of Men.

May we imitate our Saviour's perfect Example, his Humility and Charity, his Delight in doing Good, his Devotion and heavenly Mindedness, his Patience and Resignation to the divine Will; that thus our Natures may be perfected and prepared for those Rewards promised in his Gospel.

May we imitate that Purity, heavenly Mindedness, and Devotedness to Religion, which so evidently adorned his Life.

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In Imitation of him may we be exemplary for universal Holiness, and excite others to a reverent Esteem of his Excellencies, and an ardent Desire to imitate them.

May we imbibe his Spirit, imitate his Example, fight under his Banner, and uniformly obey his Laws.

For STEADFASTNESS and PERSEVERANCE.

May our Righteousness be as the Morning Sun, shining more and more until the perfect Day, that we may rejoice in the Views of thy Favour, and hereafter triumph in the Regions of eternal Light, and consummate Happiness.

Fortify us against all the Temptations and Snares of the present Life, that amidst the greatest Difficulties we may preserve our Integrity, and by Perseverance in Faith and Holiness inherit the Promises.

Train us up by whatever Methods thou pleasest for Virtue and Usefulness in the present World, and eternal Happiness in the next.

May we never content ourselves with any present Attainments, but aspire after the nearest Resemblance of thy Perfections, that so we may repose ourselves with Confidence in thy everlasting Mercy.

May the wise and excellent Laws, the kind and fatherly Admonitions, the great and noble Encouragements which thou hast given us, guard us against the Power of Sin, and render us superior to all the Temptations of this World.

Whereinsoever we have acted a wise, rational, and becoming Part, let thy Spirit fix our Resolutions, and engage us to persevere.

May we be animated and excited by the noblest and most powerful Motives to greater Degrees of Piety and Virtue, till we arrive to the Measure of a perfect Man in *Christ Jesus*.

May we be perfect as our heavenly Father is perfect.

May

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May we never pursue any Pleasure or Interest, to the Neglect of securing the Peace of our Consciences, and an Interest in thy Favour.

May we make constant Advances in the spiritual and divine Life——That we may look beyond Death with Comfort, and feel its near Approach with a chearful Serenity and Composure of Mind.

May we by a steady, patient and chearful Continuance in well doing, seek for Glory, Honour and Immortality.

Inspire us with such Principles of Fortitude and Magnanimity in Religion, that all the Temptations and Difficulties we may meet with may lose their Power over us.

May we have such a steady Regard to the Obligations of Truth and Righteousness, Piety and Virtue, as may be superior to all the Temptations and Allurements of this World.

May we have such a steady, resolved Adherence to our Duty, as that no Hardships or Sufferings, or Difficulties whatsoever, may retard our Christian Course; but may our Conduct under them be a Source of solid Pleasure and Satisfaction.

Give us such Fortitude and Firmness in thy Service, that we may dare to be singular and unfashionable whenever the Cause of Religion and Virtue demand our Countenance and Support.

May we fight the good Fight of Faith with a Firmness and Spirit worthy of the Cause in which we are engaged; that we may with good Assurance lay hold on the Hope of everlasting Life; in that glorious State where our Rewards shall infinitely exceed our Difficulties; and our present Trials add a Lustre to our future Crown that shall never fade away.

P E T I T I O N S *founded on the Frailty and Uncertainty of Life.*

May we seriously and frequently meditate on the awful, important Subjects of Death and Judgment, and

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impartially enquire into our own present State, that we may be excited to the utmost Care and Diligence.

Lord, awaken us, O Lord, excite every Soul of us to that habitual Preparation, that even a sudden Death may be to us most happy.

May we never deceive ourselves by putting far off the evil Day, when for ought we know this Night our Souls may receive the awful Summons.

May we familiarise the Thoughts of Death to our Minds in all the natural and important Ideas of it.

May the Uncertainty of the present Life teach us in Prosperity to be humble, and in Adversity to be resigned.

May we think of our present Life as of a Journey for a future and more important Existence——That we may better bear with the Evils and Trials of it——be more moderate in our Desires after the Delights and Comforts of it——and may we never mistake our Way, or faint in our Progress thro' it.

May we consider our Minutes are upon the Wing, hastening to be gone, that we are making constant Advances to an unknown immortal State; may we therefore be disengaged from an undue Attachment to Pleasures of Time and Sense, and soar above the delusive Amusements of a transitory World.

May we be duly mindful of the perishing Nature of all sublunary Things, and make it the Sum of our Desires, and the chief Scope of our Endeavours, to obtain the Favour of our supreme Governor and Judge.

May all our Members be devoted intirely to our divine Master, and be the willing Instruments for promoting his Glory; that when the fatal Period comes, when Death shall close our Eyes, we may soon after view God as our Friend and everlasting Portion.

May the Uncertainty of all created Bliss teach us to aspire after a sure and immortal Felicity.

May we improve present Opportunities to the noblest Purposes, as may render us meet for the Inheritance

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ance of the Saints in Light, and ascertain our Title to immortal Joy.

May we draw off our Affections from earthly Delights, and fix them where real, substantial and eternal Joys are to be found.

Let not the Thoughts of our going out of this World occasion any Anxiety of Mind, but may the Prospect of a glorious Eternity give us such solid Satisfaction, as all the Gratification of this Life could not give, nor all its Adversity remove.

Let the Consideration of Death, the greatest of all natural Evils, engage us to make it happy by a virtuous Life.

Impress on our Minds a Sense of the Uncertainty of Life, that we may wisely improve the fleeting Moments in the various Duties of our respective Stations.

May we so live, as we shall wish to have done when we come to die.

Let the Consideration of Death, which will soon inevitably overtake us, and the Importance of a suitable Preparation for it, lie down and rise up with us.

May we frequently meditate on Death in its most affecting and important Consequences, that we might be constantly and wisely preparing for our great and solemn Change.

May we value our present Moments as our Seed-time for Eternity, and suitably improve them.

Lord prepare us for the near Approaches of Death, that in these awful Moments we may have this Testimony of the Truth and Excellency of Religion, even the joyful and triumphant Hopes of a glorious Immortality.

Lord remove us not out of this World till we are prepared for the Happiness of the next.

O thou supreme Arbiter of Life and Death, we humbly implore we may be delivered from an accidental and sudden Death.

We implore the Continuance of our Lives, and all the Blessings that might render us comfortable in ourselves

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selves, and those who appertain to us—but if otherwise thy infinite Wisdom dispense, may we learn a calm and hearty Submission to thy Will—If thou art pleased to exercise us under Affliction, may it wean us from the World, and conduce to our Improvement in Virtue and Preparation for Heaven.

When Crosses and Disappointments befall us, let us not be so ruffled and discomposed, as to be inattentive to the still Voice of Reason, and incapable of the solid Supports and Consolations of Religion.

Prepare us for that awful Time, when we shall stand on the Borders of Eternity, ready to launch into the unknown World: Oh, that in these Moments an Interest in thy Favour and immutable Promises may enable us to triumph over Death!

As with respect to this World—Death is the End of all Men: Oh, may we, and all living, seriously lay it to Heart.

That we may not be over fond of present Things.

May we never fall into an inordinate Attachment to present Things, as shall unfit us for the sublime Employments of Religion, and spoil the improving Rectitude of our Minds.

Let not Pride, Passion, or an inordinate Love of this World, have Dominion over us.

May we always discover an Elevation of Soul, above the present sensitive Pleasures of this delusive uncertain World.

May we hence learn to regard even the lawful Enjoyments of Life, only so far as they are necessary to our Support, and subserve our highest Interest—Using this World and not abusing it, knowing the Fashion thereof passeth away.

May we neither immoderately desire, nor be anxiously fond of any of the amusing Pleasures or fleeting Honours of this delusive transitory World.

Under the various Disappointments of Life, may it appear that Religion has formed our Minds to more distant,

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distant, more noble and exalted Views, and that we are influenced by Faith and Hope in the divine Promises.

Under the various Calamities that are unavoidable, may we comfort ourselves with this Persuasion, that the World is governed and directed by unerring Wisdom, Justice and Goodness.

May a Sense of the Uncertainty of fleeting Time quicken our Improvement of the present, that when our last Day shall dawn upon us, we may not dread the close of it, but welcome the Night of Death, having good Hope thro' Grace of an everlasting Day.

May we consider that the present Enjoyments of Life are liable to be greatly embittered or taken from us, and from thence be excited not to place an undue Affection on them.

Teach us to be grave and serious under all the humbling Dispensations of thy Providence, and may we acquire from thence greater Sympathy and Tenderness of Spirit towards others in Distress.

If Adversity be the School in which our Virtues are most likely to grow and flourish, we desire to acquiesce therein, and to do and suffer thy heavenly Will.

PETITIONS drawn from the Certainty, Impartiality, and awful Consequences of the future Judgment.

May we never expose ourselves to the Rebukes of an awakened Conscience, nor to the Displeasure of almighty God, whose awful Sentence will determine our everlasting State.

Let the Remembrance of that awful Account we must one Day give, be a prevailing conducting Principle within, and may it influence all our Actions.

May the firm Belief and constant Remembrance of the future Judgment before the omniscient and impartial Judge, render us watchful and circumspect.

May no Temptation seduce, or Power embolden us, or Secrecy encourage us to do or omit what will not be excused in that awful Day.

May

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May the serious and constant Remembrance of that strict Account we must one Day give, engage us to act as becomes reasonable and accountable Creatures.

As we call on thee, the Father, who without respect of Persons judgest according to every Man's Works, may we pass the Time of our sojourning in thy Fear.

PETITIONS for Assistance to perform our relative and social Duties.

As the Time is short, and we are all hastening to our final Period, may we rejoice with them that rejoice, and weep with them that weep.

May we put on, as the Elect of God, Bowels of Compassion, Meekness and Gentleness towards others.

If any have trespassed against us, may we openly forgive and become heartily reconciled.

May we sympathize with the Afflicted, comfort the Feeble-minded, resolve the Doubting—cheer the Disconsolate—relieve the Neccessitous, and remove, as far as in our Power, all Obstructions to Virtue and Happiness.

Dispose us to forgive our Enemies, to bless them that curse us, and to pray with Sincerity for their Conviction and Happiness.

May we root out of our Hearts all the Seeds of Wrath, revenge Malice and Cruelty, which is inconsistent with a Spirit of Love and Christian Charity.

We pray thou wilt fix deep in our Minds the Seeds of universal Goodness, and may it be our Care to cultivate and improve pure, benevolent, godlike Dispositions.

Banish from our Minds all narrow, unworthy, uncharitable Sentiments of our Fellow Creatures, and whatever we wish others would do to us, may we make the Rule of our Conduct towards them.

May our Desires and Affections be refined and elevated by pure Contemplation and the Practice of social Duties.

May

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May we discover that we act suitable to our rational Nature by Meekness and Mildness of Temper, Sobriety and Chastity, Charity to the Neccessitous, and Justice to all Men.

O may we never be regardless of answering the great End of our Creator, in endowing us with those noble Faculties capable of Religion, and of Happiness consequent upon it.

Let us shew that our Notions of Morality are refined and substantial, by excelling in all those Virtues which are the Dignity of human Nature, and conducive to the Happiness of Society.

As Creatures endued with Reason formed for Society and designed for future Existence, may we act in this World with due Deference to the next, suitable to our Situation, Knowledge, Expectation and Hope.

May we sincerely sympathize with others in Affliction, and rejoice in the Opportunity of doing any good Office to advance the Happiness of others.

Let not the Seeds of Malice, Envy, and ill Will rise in our Bosoms, but raise us to that happy Temper when we shall place our chief Delight in spreading Peace and Happiness, and Joy around us to the utmost of our Power.

We would not forget the social Duties of Justice, Truth, Love and Beneficence, which we owe to our Fellow-Creatures, but may our uniform Practice of them shew ourselves to be the Disciples of Jesus.

Enlarge our Hearts to embrace the whole human Kind, make us feel a perpetual Flow of Good-Will to all thy Offspring around us.

May all the Tender and generous Affections increase in Strength, in Fervor, and Extent in our Souls, till we shall become fit to be transplanted into that happy Kingdom, where Peace and Concord, Love and Friendship reign in full Perfection for ever and ever.

O thou great Father of all, who art Love, and dwellest in Love, teach us to imitate thy perfect and universal Goodness.

May

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May we follow after Justice, Truth and Beneficence, and evidence by our Conduct that we esteem Religion our chief Honour and Excellence, the chief Support of Society, the Source of inward Pleasure, and the Foundation of our future Happiness.

Give us the Ornament of a meek and quiet Spirit, of constant diffusive disinterested Benevolence

May we practice the Duties of our several Stations and Relations to our Fellow-Creatures, by an uninterrupted Course of Probity and Truth, Generosity and Mercy.

May we become Examples of impartial Justice and Goodness, such as may render us the Ornament, the Support and Pleasure of Society, doing to others as we would they should do unto us.

Under the Sense of our own Weakness, may we be led to exercise Candour and Charity towards all our Fellow-Creatures.

May we remember that we are born, not solely for our own Good, but for the Good of others, and that we are indispensibly obliged to contribute all we can to the Happiness of those to whom we belong.

For Prudence and Discretion in the right Government of ourselves.

Fortify us against all Temptations, which by Reason of the Constitution of our Bodies, the Temper of our Minds, or the Circumstances of our Lives, do most easily beset us.

Let not Affluence and Plenty render us careless or luxurious; let it not make us forget we are Men, and that all Mankind are Brethren.

In Concurrence with the Wisdom of thy Providence and Administration, may we acquiesce in all thy Dispensations, and vindicate the Ways of God to Man.

If Adversity befall us, let us think of thee with Reverence and Honour, acknowledging all thy Ways to be equal, and with a composed patient Resignation of Soul, say, the Will of the Lord be done.

May

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May we so reflect on human Nature, as to gain a true Knowledge of ourselves, that it may prevent that Vice, Ignorance and Prejudice, that so much cleave to us.

May we always preserve the Dominion and Authority of Conscience, keeping all our Passions and Appetites under its Government, remembering, that if our Hearts condemn us not, then have we Confidence towards God.

O heavenly Father ! Author of every good and perfect Gift, rectify all the Disorders in our Souls, and restore our Faculties to their proper and worthiest Employment—may it henceforth be our chief Delight to contemplate thee in all the Discoveries thou hast made of thyself in thy wondrous Works, and in the Revelation of thy Will.

Establish thou that Part of us which is immortal and divine in its just Supremacy ; subject all our lower Passions to its Authority, that we may enjoy that Serenity and Composure which arises from its mild and gentle Sway.

Let it be our deliberate and unalterable Choice to practice the most compleat Command of our Passions, Sedateness of Thought, and such Resolution in Virtue, as may form us to a truly, rational and manly Character.

May all our Desires be just and regular ; our Passions spiritual and heavenly.

May we acquire such a Command of our Appetites, such virtuous Habits and Dispositions, as may render our Beings easy and pleasant under every Circumstance of Life.

May we be sober, chaste and temperate, ruling all our Appetites by Moderation, and our Passions with Discretion.

Let the truest Humility, impartial Justice, and extensive Benevolence be the Ornaments of our Lives.

Deliver us at all Times from the debasing, corrupting Prevalency of Custom ; and, whenever it be necessary,

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cessary, may we have the Resolution to be virtuous, though singular, in every Circumstance of Life.

Deliver us from the Snares of the Crafty, the Corruptions of the Vicious, and the Prevalence of evil Customs and Examples.

May none of our sinful Indulgencies contradict our Prayers and Professions before thee.

May we keep our Body in such a temperate State, as that it may be always subject and conformable to the Laws of Reason and Truth, and the Influence of the nobler Powers and Faculties of the Mind.

Let not Pride and Presumption mislead us : Let not low and irregular Passions debase and enfeeble our Understandings, nor corrupt Prejudices lessen the Influence of Religion on our Minds.

For Peace and Joy, and Assurance of our final Acceptance and Happiness.

May we enjoy the religious, the moral and social Satisfaction, as the Basis of present Happiness, and the surest Foundation of everlasting Pleasure.

May we, from the unquestionable Hopes of future Happiness, possess an uninterrupted, delightful Exultation of Soul, above all those Things that so much engross the Affections, and employ the Lives of Men.

May we in some Measure anticipate the Joys of the future World in our delightful Seasons of Communion with thee, in the Light of thy Countenance, and the Joys of thy Salvation.

May we feel a constant Serenity and Complacency from a Consciousness of our Integrity, and an Interest in thy Favour.

May we rejoice in the Testimony of our Consciences, that in Simplicity and godly Sincerity, we have had our Conversation in the World.

May we be hereby supported under the Vicissitudes of Life against the Anxiety and Dread of Death, and in our last Moments rejoice in Hope of thy Glory.

Let

Let our Hopes and our Affections be immoveably fixed on those Rewards of Joy and Felicity, which are reserved in Heaven for the Virtuous and Faithful.

Let us build all our Hopes of Pleasure and Happiness upon him, who is the Fountain of Life and all its Enjoyments.

Supported by the Consciousness of Virtue and Integrity, may we look beyond Death with Comfort, and feel its near Approach with Calmness and Serenity of Mind.

May Death, by our habitual Preparation for it, be to us the End of Trouble, and the Beginning of a happy Eternity.

May we enjoy the Peace of God which passeth all Understanding, and abound in Hope, thro' the Power of the Holy Ghost.

Inspire us with a modest, humble Confidence in thy Favour; carry us forward, O heavenly Father, by all the Methods of thy Providence, in the Paths of Righteousness, till we become fit to be transplanted into the higher World of Spirits, where we shall see our Maker unveiled; where we shall Love thee intirely, rejoice in thee triumphantly, and celebrate thy Praises to all Eternity.

May we feel an inward Pleasure and Complacency of Soul from the Consciousness of our Integrity, and an Interest in divine Favour.

Help us to view the Glories of the invifible, immortal State, as our future Portion and present Encouragement.

Let our Hope and Confidence ultimately center in thee, as the Source of our present Comforts, and of all our Hopes of future Happiness.

May a firm Belief of our future Happiness be that Faith in us that overcometh the World, and having overcome may we receive the End of our Faith, the Salvation of our Souls.

O Lord, give us all Joy in Believing; let the Consciousness of our Integrity in Virtue and firm Reliance
O on

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on thy Promises, give us such sublime Pleasure as may be an Earnest of our future Inheritance.

May we experience such inward Consolation from the Habits of divine Grace wrought in our Souls, as may evidence our Adoption as Children, and if Children, then Heirs, Heirs of God, and joint Heirs with *Christ*.

May Faith represent in so lively a Manner the Joys of a future World, as may animate our most faithful and vigorous Efforts in pursuit of it.

GENERAL EXPRESSIONS *in this Part of* PRAYER.

May we lay open our Minds to the Light of divine Truth, and to the lively Impressions of heavenly and divine Things—and be wisely solicitous to secure thy Approbation, which is the Perfection of Glory and Honour.

May we always remember that the Approbation of our supreme Governor and Judge is the proper Center of our Wishes for Time, and for Eternity.

May we endeavour, in our several Stations, to promote the Kingdom of God amongst Men; the Kingdom of Purity and Peace, Benevolence and Charity.

May we esteem it as our Meat and Drink, to do the Will of our heavenly Father—and may we never pursue any Pleasure or Interest in Competition with securing the Peace of our Consciences, and an Interest in thy Favour.

May we never remove our Integrity from us, nor be prevailed upon to do any Thing contrary to the solid Pleasure and Satisfaction of our Consciences—inconsistent with the unchangeable Duty we owe to our sovereign Lord, with the Rectitude of our own Nature, or our Hope of future Happiness.

We beg that we may be instructed and influenced by thy Grace, to deny all Ungodliness and worldly Lusts, and to live as becomes reasonable, dependent and accountable Creatures.

May the Services of Religion raise and elevate us above the sordid Government of animal Nature.

May

May our Hearts be warmed with the lively Influence of divine Love.

May we be the Servants of God indeed, and rejoice in that Liberty wherein Christ hath made us free.

May it be our happy Experience that Sin is mortified in us, and that our Affections and Desires are under the Influence of truly rational, and Christian Principles.

May we deport ourselves as the Offspring of a kind Father, and as the Disciples of a dying Saviour.

May our Gratitude in Prosperity, our Contentment in Adversity, a constant predominant Love to God, and good Will toward Men, be the Ornament of our Lives, and an Evidence of our being the Children of God.

May our Minds be possessed with this Truth, that spiritual and eternal Things are all in all for Time and Eternity.

May we never content ourselves that we are inoffensive in the World, but aspire after higher Degrees of Piety and Resignation to the divine Will, Integrity and Seriousness of Mind.

May our Minds be so possessed with pure and influencing Principles, as may render us conspicuously holy and useful.

May we become eminent for Piety, Justice and Beneficence, remarkable for Humility and Meekness, and for all the happy Effects of it.

May we make Religion the Study, the Ornament, and the Pleasure of our Lives.

May we have such a constant, influencing Conviction of this important Truth, that our highest Happiness consists in the Knowledge, the Love, the Enjoyment of God, the sovereign Good, as may make every Shadow of Happiness disappear.

Make us more sensible that the true Happiness of Life arises from the Exercise of Purity, Charity, and the Love of God, in the Consciousness of those Virtues, and in the consequent Prospects of a blessed Immortality.

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May we always remember that superior Advantages of Body, Mind, or Estate, require a proportionable Improvement, to secure the divine Approbation and Favour.

May neither the delusive Pleasures, nor the distracting Cares of this World, Things present, nor Things to come, separate us from the Love of God.

May our Lives be regulated by the glorious Precepts of our holy Religion, suitable to the glorious Privileges and exalted Hopes we derive from it.

Wherever our Lot is cast, or whatever our Station of Life may be, may we be equally careful to discharge every Part of our Duty to thee our Father, who seekest in Secret.

Conscious that every Disposition to Virtue, every Exertion of our Power in the Practice of Religion, cannot fail of their due Honour and Reward, may we act suitable to such Expectations and Hopes.

May we not only plead the Cause of Religion, but recommend it by our Practice— Thus may we silence the Clamours of the Ignorant, soften and remove the Prejudices of the Vicious, be applauded in ourselves, and approved by others; supported under the various Circumstances of Life, fortified against the Terrors of Death, and receive, as our ultimate Good, the Approbation of our supreme Governor and Judge, and the Rewards of immortal Joy.

May we arrive at the most elevated Degrees of Piety and Virtue, and to the most solacing Views of thy Favour, in those blissful Regions where we shall enjoy Happiness adequate to our most extensive Wishes, and lasting as our immortal Souls.

May we attain to confirmed Habits of Piety and Virtue — to a nearer Resemblance of God, and to the joyful, triumphant Views of thy Favour in the Regions of eternal Light, where we shall join thy heavenly, angelic Host in more exalted, elevated and sublime Strains of Devotion, than in our present imperfect State we are capable of.

May

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May the Father of Mercies and God of all Goodness graciously assist us in our progressive Meetness for that State where we shall serve and love him, in a Manner more worthy of his Perfections, and enjoy him to the utmost Extent of our Capacities.

Hold up our Goings in thy Paths, that our Footsteps may be for ever established, and that we may have a humble, solid, and joyful Confidence in thy Mercy.

May we add to our Faith, greater Degrees of Courage in our Christian Profession—A growing Acquaintance with the Things of God—The proper Government of our Passions and Appetites—An unshaken Patience in doing and suffering thy Will—A progressive Preparation for the Employment and Happiness above—A charitable and diffusive Affection to our Fellow-Christians, as having one and the same Father, as being Heirs of the same Hope, thro' one Mediator, and Members of his Church, by public Baptism—and may we still add a charitable Disposition to our Fellow-Creatures, and a Readiness to forgive our Enemies.

That these Virtues being in us, and increasing, we may be fruitful in every good Word and Work, and at last have an Entrance administered to us into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour *Jesus Christ*.

PETITIONS for TEMPORAL BLESSINGS.

Look down in Mercy on thy frail and erring Creatures, raise in us such just Ideas of thy universal Providence, that we may constantly view ourselves under thy Protection, and as having all our Affairs overruled by thy Providence.

Let the Disappointments and Difficulties of the present Life quicken our Preparation for a more exalted and durable State.

We acknowledge our Lives are absolutely at thy Pleasure; thou withholdest our Breath, and we die: Thou changeest our Countenance, and sendest us a-

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way—We therefore humbly beseech thee to lengthen out our Tranquility.

Continue our Lives yet a little longer ; spare us, O God, most Mighty, O holy and most merciful Father, remove us not from this World till we are fitted for the next.

The Lord in much Mercy regard us ; whilst on this Side the Grave render our Beings easy and delightful to us.

Continue our Lives, our Health, the Use of our Reason—Free us from all sad Accidents and calamitous Events, from all tormenting Pains and grievous Diseases.

We implore the Smiles of thy Providence ; O that Goodness and Mercy may follow us all the Days of our Lives — that we may be drawn to thee with the Cords of Love.

Preserve to us, O God, the Health of our Bodies, and our Capacities of Pleasure in ourselves, and of Usefulness to others.

Continue our bodily Health, and the regular Exercise of our reasoning Powers, replenish our Memories with a saving Knowledge, and fit us at all Times for the Service of God and our Souls.

We commit to thy fatherly Care all our Concerns of a temporal Nature ; we beg that all the external Circumstances of our Lives may be as thou knowest will be best for us.

Continue our Health, and favour us with the Comforts of Life without Interruption—Or prepare us for Sickness and other Vicissitudes, as thou shalt think proper. We will trust in thy Mercy with this humble, importunate Request—that we may be prepared for our great Change before it comes.

PETITIONS *adapted to the Morning.*

We desire to commit ourselves to thy Protection and Guidance this Day.

Give us thy Blessing with our daily Bread.

Prosper

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Prosper the Work of our Hands.

Provide for our daily returning Wants.

Succeed all our lawful Undertakings.

Prepare us for the Duties and Services of this Day.

Make us sensible of the Blessing of Life, that we may improve it to the most valuable Purposes.

May we set the Lord before us this Day.

May it be a Day of rational Pleasure to ourselves, and of great Usefulness to others.

May no Temptation this Day seduce us from our Duty, check our Integrity, and stain our Virtue.

P E T I T I O N S *adapted to the Evening.*

May we lie down this Night pardoned and accepted.

May no domestic Evil befall us, nor midnight Outcries affright us.

Let the seasonable recruiting Sleep of the Night-Watches prepare us to meet the Morning with Pleasure and with Gratitude.

May thy Protection, O God, be the Defence and Security of us and our Dwellings.

May the Prospect of another Day (and another Sabbath) impress on us such Dispositions as may contribute to our Improvement, and add to our Pleasure on Reflection.

As Sleep is the nearest Resemblance of Death, may we enter on it with the most serious and affecting Thoughts of our last Moments.

As the Shadows of the Evening are stretched over us, may it impress the most serious Thoughts of the Night of Death, and the Importance of preparing for it.

TRANSITION *from PETITION to PLEADING.*

We are under the most sacred and indispensable Obligations to thee, as our Creator and Benefactor, to do Honour to thy great Name, and to celebrate the transcendent Excellencies and Perfections of thy Nature.

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We would most devoutly pray, O thou first and greatest of all Beings, that to thee alone we may solemnly and for ever devote ourselves, and consecrate the noblest Powers of our Souls.

Conscious of our innumerable Obligations, we would most devoutly dedicate ourselves unto thee. O Lord assist us to regard our Actions, as Creatures consecrated to thee.

C H A P. VI.

PLEADING *with GOD in Behalf of ourselves and others.*

THOU, O Lord, art our Creator, to whom therefore should we refer our most important Interests but to thee, to thy paternal Love, to thy watchful beneficent Providence?

We are thine by necessary and absolute Dependence on thee; our Times are in thine Hands; thine are all our Ways — From whom then can we look for Succour but from thee, O God.

We are thine by the Ties and Obligations of innumerable Blessings, which in the Course of thy indulgent and propitious Providence thou bestowest on us; we would therefore with the deepest Humility, and with the sincerest Gratitude of Soul, pray that we may never act in Contradiction to the Law and Authority of our sovereign Benefactor.

We are the Subjects of thy moral Government—sensible of the Weakness of our own Hearts, we would not presume to dictate the Measures of thy Providence, whether we shall rejoice in Prosperity, or glorify thee by suffering; we would acquiesce in thy Dispensations, and submit chearfully to the Laws of thy Kingdom. — Oh! may we never incur the Guilt of Rebellion, and of murmuring against thee the supreme and righteous Governor of the World—Thou only canst make us honourable, useful and happy.

Lord

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Lord dispose of all outward Circumstances as thou seest best.

We are thine, O Lord, by the free and voluntary, solemn, and public Surrender of ourselves to thee. We have given in our Names amongst thy Children — Oh that by a constant Exertion of all our Powers and Capacities in thy Service we may be united more closely to thee — that we may be as Mount Zion that cannot be moved.

We are thine by Virtue of that Redemption wrought out for us by *Jesus Christ* — We hope we are interested in that Grace — that we have a Share in the Privileges of the Gospel Covenant — and hereby we are encouraged to make our Approaches to the Throne of Grace in the full Assurance of Faith.

By many solemn, by many public Acts of Religion, we have devoted and engaged ourselves unto thee, from the fullest Conviction of our Duty. Oh, may we never expose ourselves to the Rebukes of an awakened Conscience, by forfeiting our Integrity.

By all the most sacred, most awful Considerations, we desire to be habitually devoted to thee, and to encourage our Souls in a constant Dependence on thy sovereign Mercy. *We are thine, Lord save us !*

O thou in whose Hands are our immortal Souls, as well as our expiring Breath ! Leave us not, O Lord, to our own inconsiderate Views, but guide us by thy unerring Councils, and when our Warfare shall be accomplished receive us to thy Glory.

O Lord, we are sensible of the Vanity of all worldly Good, we have therefore chosen God as our Portion ; we have often renewed our covenant Engagements, and thou, O God, hast been witness to the Sincerity of our Transactions — We rejoice in our Interest in thee — we can have no Want but thou art privy to, nor any Wish but thou hast Goodness to grant, if thy Wisdom sees it best for us.

Sensible of the infinite Importance of securing the Happiness of our immortal Souls, we come as humble

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ble and importunate Supplicants; we would ask every Blessing from thyself with an Earnestness suitable to its Importance; we would fill our Mouths with Arguments, and sum up all our Desires, in this that thou wilt be our God and our Portion for ever.

We have been often professedly giving up ourselves unto thee; we would renew and confirm our Choice with more devout and vigorous Resolutions to be intirely and for ever thine. Accept us, O Lord, take us into thy Favour, guide us by thy Council, and bring us at last to thy Kingdom and Glory.

Thou art our God, the God of our Youth; we have had long Experience of thy Goodness: To thee therefore would we refer ourselves, in thy future Guidance would we therefore confide, to protect, and defend us from all Evil, and to crown us with Salvation and Success.

One Generation unto another have testified of thy Power to save, and of thy Readiness to succour in Time of the greatest Difficulty. Thou, O Lord, hast encouraged the Confidence and Supplications of thy Servants. Under all our Difficulties our Eyes are therefore up unto thee, who over-rulest all Events of Kingdoms, according to the sovereign Councils of thine own Will, to accomplish the great Intentions of thy providential and moral Government.—Thou canst rescue us out of every Danger, and put into our Mouths unexpected Songs of Praise.

Thou hast preserved these Kingdoms in Times past, when under threatening Circumstances. Lord, regard the Supplications of the Faithful and Upright, who plead with thee to avert thy Judgments, and to remember Mercy.

For thy Mercy Sake, for the Honour of thy great Name, suffer not any Designs to prosper, that tend to subvert the Purity, the Simplicity and extensive Influence of Christianity.—But may the Principles and Practice of true Religion revive, and good Men of every Party be more heartily united; the Righteous
more

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more firmly established, and the Prosperity of these Kingdoms fixed upon a more lasting and durable Foundation.

TRANSITION to INTERCESSION.

Oh! thou universal Parent, to whom the Eyes of all rational Creatures are naturally directed, accept our Intercession in Behalf of Mankind.

As we bear on our Minds the Cases of others who are destitute of many valuable Blessings we enjoy, we humbly presume to make Mention thereof before thee.

O thou who art the common Father of Mankind, the Lover of Souls (for all Souls are thine) graciously attend to the united Prayers of thy Churches.

O thou almighty Sovereign and Friend of Mankind, hear us when we pray to thee in Behalf of the whole World.

O thou who hast commanded that Prayer, Intercession, and giving of Thanks be made for all Men; extend thy compassionate Regard to the whole World.

O thou who hast encouraged the Supplications of thy rational Offspring, in thine infinite Mercy regard our Brethren of the human Race.

And now, Lord, to thee, as the great Father of the whole Family in Heaven and Earth, would we recommend all our Fellow-Creatures.

We would not confine our Prayers to ourselves, but in order to improve in our Minds the most benevolent and friendly Dispositions, we would recommend to thy fatherly Compassion all our Fellow-Creatures.

O thou, Father of the Universe, who hath taught us that it is good and acceptable in thy Sight, that we should make Intercession for all Men, accept us when we pray.—

O thou, God of the Spirits of all Flesh, who would'st have all Men to be saved, grant that thy Way may be known upon Earth, and thy Saving help to all Nations.

Hear

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Hear us, O God of our Salvation, when we supplicate the Throne of thine everlasting Mercy in Behalf of all Mankind.—Or for any who have desired or need an Interest in our Prayers.

C H A P. VII.

INTERCESSION *for the whole World.*

OH! may the God of all Grace be universally acknowledged and celebrated, and the Religion of Nature more generally understood and practised.

Be merciful to the whole World, enlighten the dark Corners thereof with the Knowledge of thyself, and with the Gospel of our Lord *Jesus Christ*, in its Beauty and Simplicity, and sow the Seeds of Virtue and Happiness in all Parts of the World.

May Christianity spread its Light and reforming Influences throughout the World, that at the Name of *Jesus* every Knee may bow, and every Tongue confess, that *Jesus Christ* is Lord to the Glory of God the Father.

Extend thy Compassion throughout the whole World, dispense to them that yet remain in Darkness the glad Tidings of the Gospel, that all may know thy Will, and be finally saved.

Give thy Son the Heathen for his Inheritance, and the uttermost Parts of the Earth for his Possession, may the People praise thee, O Lord; yea, may all the People praise thee.

May those that sit in Darkness have Light springing up unto them, and those that reside as in the Region and Shadow of Death, hear the gracious Sound of the Gospel.

May thine almighty Power, thine infinite Wisdom and all-comprehending Goodness be acknowledged and celebrated by all thy Creatures.

Remove the Prejudices of thine ancient People the *Jews*, that they may be again restored to thy Favour,
and

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and let *Mahomedan* Imposture, come to an End, that so throughout all the Earth there may be but one Lord and one *Christ*.

May the Knowledge of God and of *Jesus Christ* cover the Face of the Earth, as the Waters cover the Face of the Deep — bring in thine antient People the *Jews*, and hasten the Fulness of the *Gentiles*.

Put an End to Idolatry and Superstition, and to all immoral tyrannical Practices, to all Violence and Oppression, and to the Effusion of human Blood; and may Peace and Truth, Benevolence and Charity, Liberty, Virtue and Happiness universally prevail.

Put a final Period to *Pagan* Darkness and Idolatry, to *Mahomedan* Imposture, to *Jewish* Infidelity, to *Papish* Corruption and Superstition, to all Impositions on the Consciences of Mankind; and let the Gospel have free Course, that thy Name may every where be glorified.

Take unto thyself, O Lord, thy great Power and Reign, that the Kingdoms of this World may become the Kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ, and may the Worship of the one God and Father of all, through one Lord *Jesus Christ*, be every where professed and practised.

Put an End to Idolatry, Superstition and Persecution — break the Power of Oppression — vindicate the Rights of Conscience and quiet the turbulent Spirits of Mankind.

Oh that the pure undefiled Religion of *Jesus* might spread its benign Influences to the remotest Parts of the Earth.

Let those Principles, which countenance and encourage Persecution, be intirely rooted out, that so thy Churches may have Rest, and walking in the Fear of the Lord, and in the Comfort of the Holy Ghost, may be edified and multiplied.

Graciously interpose to put an End to the Triumphs of Tyranny and to the Effusion of human Blood.

Shew

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Shew the *Jews* their unreasonable Prejudices; bring in the Fulness of the *Gentiles*; convince *Mahomedans* of their gross Delusions; turn the Hearts of cruel Persecutors, let them be no longer drunk with the Blood of the Saints and the Blood of the Martyrs—How long, O Lord, holy, just and true, shall the Souls of thy Servants cry in vain for Vengeance?

May that Kingdom which thou hast established by *Jesus Christ*, be extended throughout the Earth—May the Sun of Righteousness arise with convincing Light and Glory upon all Mankind.

Let the Kingdom of Grace and Truth prevail, and dissipate those Clouds of Error and Superstition, which have so long obscured the Lustre of the Redeemer's Kingdom.

Break the Power of Oppression, and vindicate the Rights of Conscience universally: In the mean Time support every one that suffers Persecution for the Cause of Truth; may they preserve their Integrity, under the most trying Circumstances.

Regard such as suffer under any Degree of Persecution and Oppression for the Testimony of a good Conscience—Let not the Rod of the Wicked longer rest on the Back of the Righteous—and as their Tribulation has abounded for *Christ*, may their Consolation abound likewise.

May the Kingdoms of this World more resemble the Kingdom of God, in Righteousness, Peace and Joy.

May the glorious Light of the Gospel have such large and extensive Influence upon Earth, as is suitable to the Excellence of its Laws, and Importance of its Doctrines.

Let the People praise thee, O God; yea, let all the Nations be glad, and sing for Joy for the Salvation of God.

With a generous Sympathy we would remember before thee our persecuted Brethren. O that God
would

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would change the Hearts of the Persecutors, and let thy Servants rejoice in thy Salvation.

May all Mankind have their Understandings, and their Hearts united, in acknowledging, adoring, and humbly serving thee, the only true God, and *Jesus Christ*, whom thou hast sent.

May professed Christians remember their indispensable Obligations to perform their Vows, to fulfil their Resolutions, and assert the Truth of their Character as Christians.

Oh, that all our Fellow Creatures may become Fellow Christians; succeed the preaching of the Gospel to this End, and dispose all that profess Christianity to recommend it by their Lives.

May all thy reasonable Offspring, capable of contemplating thy Perfections, hallow and reverence thy great Name, suitably to the Condition of their Natures, and the Discoveries of thy Will.

For GREAT-BRITAIN, IRELAND, our ALLIES, &c.

O thou Patron and Friend of *Great-Britain*, thou hast long distinguished us by civil and religious Liberties; continue we intreat thee thy Protection and Favour to these Isles.

The Lord mercifully regard our Intercessions, in Behalf of this sinful Nation; a Nation where thy Name is profaned, thy Worship is neglected, thy Mercies are abused, and thy Grace turned into Wantonness—We are justly afraid of thy Judgments, the Arrows of Death have been already discharged on our most useful Animals—The Earth has been made to tremble under our Feet—We are threatened with Scarcity of Bread, and involved in desolating Wars—Are not these the Signals of thy Displeasure?

O that the Inhabitants of this Land may lay these alarming Considerations to Heart, and return every one from his evil Way, that Iniquity may not be our Ruin.

Pour

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Pour out a Spirit of Reformation on the Inhabitants of this Land, that Murder and Adultery, Fornication and Perjury, Theft and Lying, Cursing and Swearing, Envy and Coveteousness, may cease from amongst us.

May a Reverence of the Name and Worship of God, Temperance and Chastity, Justice and Honesty, Truth and Fidelity, Love and Good-will to Mankind, be the Stability of our Times.

Hasten those glorious Times when Fraud and Injustice, Contention and Malice, and every evil Work shall cease, and Truth and Righteousness, Peace and Charity prevail amongst us.

Lengthen out our Tranquility, give Peace in our Day, O Lord.

But if in the Course of thy Providence, the Sword must be drawn for our Defence, avert from us the Triumph of our Enemies.

Save us from the Calamities of intestine War, and the Devastation of foreign Invasion.

We would glory in the Privileges of our excellent Constitution delivered down to us by our Ancestors, whereby we are freed from Persecution, Terror and Blood. Oh! may these Blessings be preserved, increased, and conveyed in their utmost Extent to our latest Posterity.

May a deep Sense of Religion influence the Minds of our Legislature, that our Laws may be calculated to promote a general Reformation, and the Example of all our Nobility and Gentry, encourage and subserve it that we may become a religious, and so a happy People.

We thank God that the glorious Revolution after various Struggles and Expence of Blood, was established by Law, and settled in the illustrious House of *Hanover*—May the King long live, the Friend of Liberty, and the Guardian of our Religion.

Have Regard to the Land of our Nativity, cure all our evil Tempers and unchristian Animosities, may
true

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true Religion and Righteousness, mutual Love and Charity flourish and abound more amongst us.

O Father of all Mercy, have Compassion on us, who are the Work of thy Hands, the Objects of thy long-continued providential Care; enter not into Judgment with us; suffer not our Enemies to prevail against us; but for thy Name Sake, O Lord, in the Multitude of thy tender Compassions, continue to bless this Land.

Bless our Fleets, our Armies, our Traffic, our Husbandry; make us to rejoice in the Midst of Plenty.

Preserve us from Storms and Earthquakes, from War, Sedition and Tumult, from Plague, Sickness and Famine.

Continue to us the Enjoyment of Health and Plenty; give us the former and the latter Rain in its Season; reserve to us the appointed Weeks of Harvest, and crown the Year with thy Goodness.

Give seasonable Weather for ripening and in gathering the Fruits of the Earth. May the Days of the Harvest be accomplished, that there may be Plenty of Bread for the Eater, and of Seed for the Sower.

Bless and succour all our Protestant Friends and Allies—thy Servant, whom thou hast raised up to check the Ambition of our Enemies—to protect, defend, and enlarge the Protestant Interest.

Mercifully regard such as are the Patrons of Virtue and Liberty; prolong their Lives, and render them farther useful to us.

For his Majesty King GEORGE, and his ISSUE, &c.

O thou by whom Kings reign, graciously regard our lawful and rightful Sovereign King *George*, establish his Throne in Righteousness, and let his Crown sit easy on his Head.

We intreat thee, O Lord, that thou wilt bless our rightful Sovereign King *George*, endue his Mind with Wisdom suitable to his important and eminent Station, and to every difficult Conjunction.

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Bless in an especial Manner thy Servant, our Sovereign King *George*, protect his Person, prosper and prolong his Government; may he continue long to sway the Sceptre of these Kingdoms with Lustre and Dignity in Righteousness and Judgment, and for the Peace and Tranquility thereof.

Bless his Majesty King *George*, may he long live the Guardian and Glory of this Land; may he see the Designs of his Enemies frustrated, and the Prosperity of his faithful Subjects, established on a solid Foundation.

Give him Magnanimity and Fortitude, under the Weight of Government; may his Reign over us be long and glorious, easy to himself and happy to all his Subjects, and to *Europe* in general.

Bless his present Majesty, may he live and reign the Patron of Liberty, the Guardian of our Laws, and the Defender of the Protestant Religion; and whenever in thy Providence his Royal Highness shall inherit the Crown, may he also inherit his princely Virtues, and be a public Blessing to these Kingdoms.

May he long live the Delight of his Subjects, and the Glory of *Europe*.

Bless his Royal Highness the Prince of *Wales*, the Princess Dowager of *Wales*, the Duke, the Princesses, and every Branch of that august House; may they have Blessings suitable to their exalted Stations, and may they be the happy Instruments of conveying religious and civil Liberty to the latest Posterity.

May they have every Blessing that will render them truly virtuous and useful, honourable and happy in Life, and abundantly glorious in the future World.

Oh! thou sovereign Ruler amongst all the Kingdoms of the Earth! Bless the great Senate of this Nation, the King's Council, and the Nation's Council, that the Result of their Measures may be Peace, Liberty and Happiness to these Kingdoms.

May his Majesty be animated with an invincible Desire to promote the civil and religious Liberties of his Protestant Subjects.

Bless

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Bless his Majesty's most honourable Privy-Council, may they be Men of clear Discernment, of true Courage and of strict Integrity.

We humbly pray for all to whom the Conduct of public Affairs are committed, that they may steadily and zealously pursue the Welfare, Honour and Prosperity of this Nation.

Influence the Privy-Council and all subordinate Ministers of State to the most laudible Designs, and give Wisdom suitable to conduct them, that they may in their respective Stations subserve the true Interest of these Kingdoms.

Endow our Senators with Wisdom, and our Judges with Righteousness: May all that share in the Administration of Justice and Government be suitably qualified to discharge their several Trusts, and prospered in the due Execution thereof.

Bless our Nobility and Gentry, and may all that are advanced to Places of Honour and Trust adorn their Characters and Stations, by Piety towards God and Good-will to Mankind, that Peace and Truth, Virtue and Happiness may apparently increase.

May expanded Benevolence, a Regard to Justice, an uncorrupted and inflexible Zeal for civil and religious Liberty, and for the Practice of moral and social Virtue more generally prevail.

We pray for all public Communities of Men; may every good Society be favoured with thy special Protection, and crowned with Prosperity and Honour.

May Justice be more honoured in our Courts of Judicature—Corruption and Iniquity cease from amongst us.

We pray that all Mankind, especially those in public Stations, may aim at being as useful as possible, and endeavour to communicate the most extensive and general Good.

O thou great King and Governor of the World, pour out upon this Nation a Spirit of humble Repentance and Reformation, a Spirit of fervent Prayer

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and Supplication, a Spirit of Wisdom and Piety, of Purity, of Peace, and of mutual Harmony.

May all the Inhabitants of this Land become the proper Objects of thy merciful, indulgent Providence; and wilt thou, O gracious God, succeed all our public Schemes and Councils for the Security of our Religion, our Liberties, civil and sacred.

Prosper all our public Councils and Measures so far as they are consistent with Equity, with the Rights of Nations, and conducive to the general Good of Mankind.

INTERCESSION *for the Christian Church in general.*

Bless the whole Christian Church of whatever Name and Denomination; may the People rejoice in the Gifts and Qualifications of their Ministers, and the Ministers in the Success of their Ministry.

Look down in much Mercy on the divided and distracted State of the Christian World, and put a stop to those Errors and Corruptions both in Faith and Practice, which have overspread so great a Part of it.

How long, O Lord, Holy, Just and True, shall the Faith once delivered to the Saints in Purity and Simplicity, be perverted by human Inventions and groundless Traditions.

May all that profess themselves Christians put on the Temper of pure and uncorrupted Christianity.

Compose all unchristian Animosities, and may pure Religion, and undefiled before God, even the Father be the Glory of the Christian Church.

May a Spirit of Seriousness, a reverential Fear of thy great Name, true Principles of Piety, of Righteousness and Goodness, be the Ornament of every Christian Professor.

May the sacred Truths of the Gospel be more generally and more effectually inculcated, that Superstition and vain Traditions may be for ever laid aside.

Rectify every Thing that is amiss in the Christian Church, in Doctrine, Discipline, Worship and Practice.

May

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May all reformed Churches renounce more entirely any Dominion over the Faith and Consciences of their Fellow Christians; and be brought nearer to the Truth, as it is in Jesus.

May the Ordinances of the Gospel be more generally practised according to their original Institution, and for the same valuable Purposes,—may Baptism be indeed an outward visible Sign of the inward spiritual Grace, and the Commemoration of the Lord's Supper, be a shewing forth his Death till he comes.

Bless thy Servants according to their best Desires and most important Requests; bring Salvation to thine Heritage, and make thy chosen People joyful.

May professed Christians every where feel the quick and powerful Energy of the Word of God upon their Consciences, inspiring them with such amiable and becoming Affections, as may be an ever present Guard against all Temptations.

May all that enjoy the Light of the Gospel feel its vital Power, and Efficacy upon their Hearts.

M I N I S T E R S.

Bless the Ministers of the Everlasting Gospel; clothe them with Salvation and Success, that thy Saints may shout for Joy; may they be Examples to the Flock in Word, in Conversation, in Charity, in Faith and in Purity,

May those that labour in the Ministry preach the Gospel as it is in Truth, as it is in Jesus; may they recommend our Religion by their Examples, and be as burning and shining Lights, in the midst of Error and Wickedness.

Excite every one that has entered on that important Task of enlightening and reforming Mankind to the greatest Care, that they may approve themselves unto God, and become greatly beneficial to all that hear them.

Send forth more skilful and faithful Labourers into thy Vineyard. Oh, that they may experience such

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Assistance and Success, as may convince them that thou art with them of a Truth.

Bless, in an especial Manner, those who minister in the Word and Doctrine of the Gospel ; may they be adorned with the Gifts and Graces of thy Spirit, and may Numbers be daily added to thy Church, even such as shall be saved.

Lead all Ministers of the Gospel to teach the sacred Truths with Plainness and Conviction, and to inculcate the Duties of Religion with Power and Influence, that so their Preaching might conduce to saving themselves and those that hear them.

Bless thy Servant, who statedly Ministers in this Place, render his Duty easy, and his Labours abundantly useful.

Bless the Labours of such as endeavour to defend the Cause of Truth and true Religion, and increase their Number.

Bless those who are Examples of Piety and Virtue in the Church ; all religious Societies and Seminaries of Learning, particularly those for qualifying Ministers for the pastoral Charge. The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in foreign Parts. For the Promotion of Christian Knowledge at Home, and for the Suppression of Vice and Immorality.

Make the Ministers of the everlasting Gospel faithful and skilful, diligent and successful ; and may great Mercy and Grace be with them, and with all that love our Lord Jesus Christ in Sincerity.

May they have just Notions of the Rights and Interest of the Christian Church, and according to their proper Sphere and Capacity be instrumental to preserve and promote them.

May they be pious, fervent and indefatigable ; may they be Examples of Fortitude, Serenity and Resignation to thy divine Will.

May they be wholly devoted to the sacred Interest of Religion ; and let God and Man be Witnesses that they are faithful,

For

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For such who may attend and join with us in our worshipping Assemblies.

Be with us in our further Attendance on this Service; may it be with great Seriousness, Candor and Delight; give unto thy People an hearing ear, and an understanding Heart, may none of us be forgetful Hearers, but Doers of thy Word.

May not a vain Curiosity, groundless Prejudices, or any other Cause whatever, prevent us from making a proper Improvement of the present Opportunity.

Bless the present Solemnity; sanctify the Providence that hath called us together at this Time; may we eye thy Providence in all Events, acknowledging thee the great Arbiter of Life and Death.

Oh may Admonition sink deep into the attentive and obedient Heart, and produce its genuine Effects.

May the Word now delivered be attended with such Blessing from on high, as to fill us with Heavenly Wisdom, to form us to true Holiness, and fit us for future Glory.

May we depart from thy more immediate Presence under the indelible Impressions of those divine Truths we have heard; and may they effectually form us to the Character of such as shall be saved.

As we have been thus publicly professing our Reverence and Gratitude to thy supreme Majesty, may the habitual Disposition of our Minds, and the external Conduct of our Lives, be consistent with these our Professions.

If we have this Day learnt more of God, of Heaven, of Eternity, and the Way to Happiness, may our Knowledge more powerfully influence our Practice.

May the Word preached prove the Seed of Life and Immortality to the Hearers.

Under the Enjoyment of so many Advantages and Privileges, may we be trained up in the Ways of Peace and Piety, of Meekness and Humility, of Righteousness and Joy, till we come to the City of the living

God, to an innumerable Company of Angels, and to the Spirits of just Men made perfect.

For Persons afflicted in Mind, Body, or Estate.

O merciful Creator, we would humbly pray for the Sons and Daughters of Affliction, remove their Sickness, ease their Pain, strengthen them that are weak, support the feeble sinking Spirits, and compose the disordered in Mind.

Extend thy Mercy to all afflicted Persons, of whatever Name or Denomination; to all who are in a State of Uneasiness of Mind, or Pain of Body, a State of Want or Sorrow, of Persecution or Oppression, support them under it; and if consistent with thine infinite Wisdom deliver them from it.

Be gracious to all that labour under the Straits of Poverty, that suffer Persecution for the Testimony of a good Conscience, that mourn under any unjust Oppression, that are exercised with bodily Pains and Diseases, or are discomposed and disordered in Mind; the Lord mercifully regard their Unhappiness and deliver them, through thine infinite Goodness.

Succour the Tempted, relieve the Oppressed, be especially the Father of the Fatherless, plead the Widow's Cause in Judgment, and may those who mourn in *Zion* rejoice.

Pity those who are under any Kind of Distress—who are bowed down by Reason of Pain or Trouble—Lord, support the feeble sinking Spirits, give them Beauty for Ashes, the Oil of Joy for Mourning, and the Garment of Praise for the Spirit of Heaviness.

Any who are under Clouds, and have their Enjoyment of Life interrupted by the Deprivation of their Reason, the Lord mercifully regard our Prayers in their Behalf, and in much Mercy remove their Disorder.

We would heartily sympathize with all who are under gloomy and despairing Apprehensions of thy Mercy; we intreat thee, O most merciful Father, that

that thou wilt compassionate their Case, and remove the Cause of their Affliction.

Pity such as are bowed down with Grief, lamenting the Loss of a near Relative. O that thou wouldst convince them of the Wisdom and Goodness of thy Providence, and teach them to acquiesce with Patience.

Any that have sustained Loss by dreadful and unavoidable Accidents, give them a calm Composure of Mind, and such Submission to their Circumstances, as may more than compensate their present Loss.

If any are the Cause of Grief to us, through their Forgetfulness of God and their Duty to him, in much Mercy interpose by thy Providence to awaken them to a Sense of their Folly and their Misery—Engage them to Repentance, and reclaim them to Virtue.

Support the Aged, succour the Tempted, satisfy the Doubting, and supply the Poor with Bread.

May the Aged and Feeble be supported, under all their Declines of Nature—May the hoary Head be found in the Way of Righteousness—May they patiently wait, and wisely prepare for their great Change.

O thou God of all Compassion, who comfortest them that are cast down, regard the Prayers of thy Servant, under thy afflicting Hand, and our Supplications, in his Behalf; and if thou, O Lord, shalt recover him to Health, may he be excited to the sincerest Gratitude, and to the most genuine and lively Expressions of it.

Let not his Affliction be unto Death, but give such Blessing to the Means used as may be effectual to his Recovery, and let him yet live to praise thee in his Family and in thy House.

May all his Afflictions be sanctified; and though they are not joyous, but grievous, may they produce the peaceable Fruits of Righteousness—give him that Patience and Resignation that is becoming the Christian Character—look upon his Affliction and his Pains, and mitigate them, if consistent with thy heavenly Wisdom.

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O thou God of all Consolation, regard according to thine essential Goodness thy afflicted Servant now approaching the Shades of Death—Lord, perfect his Repentance—Strengthen his Faith—Enlarge and confirm his Hope—Support his feeble sinking Spirits, and as his dying Pains may increase, may the Consolations of thy Spirit abound also.

Where any are drawing near the Gates of Death place thine everlasting Arm under their fainting Head, to support them, and give them Patience, Consolation and Joy, in the Views of thy Favour.

Accept the Thankfulness of any that have received signal Mercies at thy Hands, may they be led to demonstrate their Gratitude by a suitable Improvement of them.

Thou, Lord, hast chastened, but not destroyed; thou hast delivered his Body from Death, his Eyes from Tears, and his Feet from falling—Thou hast heard the Voice of his Supplication; thou hast granted him Life and Favour, and thy Visitation hath preserved his Spirit—Lord, give him an habitual, cheerful, grateful Disposition, that he may live suitably to his increasing Obligations.

For our Friends, Relatives, &c.

We humbly pray for all that are related to us in the Bands of Nature, that they may receive Mercies suited to their various Wants, and that they may wisely improve them.

We pray for all our real Friends and Benefactors; for all that are in any Relation to us, dependent on us, or dear to us, that they may be wise, virtuous, and happy.

Lord, reward our Benefactors, all that have done or intended our Good.

The Lord bless our Friends and Relations, bestow on them whatever thou knowest to be best for them—And we heartily desire to forgive our Enemies, and pray that they may be forgiven of God.

Any

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Any that have entered into a new Relation in Life, the Lord dispose them to the Duties of that Relation, and give them all the Joy and Comfort that can flow from it.

For the RISING GENERATION.

Be, in an especial Manner, the Guide of the Young; may they remember thee in their Youth, and serve thee all the Days of their Lives.

May they know thy Will, be fitted for thy Service, and remain stedfast in the Ways of Religion.

May our Children remember their Creator in the Days of their Youth—May they live before thee, and wilt thou be their God and their great Reward?—As they increase in Years, may they increase in the most valuable Knowledge, in Stature, and in Favour, both with God and Man.

O that our Children may early learn to know thee, the God of their Fathers, and to serve thee with a perfect Heart, and with a willing Mind.

May they be early and substantially wise, sincerely and uniformly good, compleatly and eternally happy.

Lord, succeed our Endeavours to instil into their Minds a true Sense of Religion and Virtue, and to engage them to persevere therein.

Where any have neglected to make a Profession of the Christian Name, and have not solemnly dedicated themselves unto thee, lead them to consider their Obligations to their supreme Law-giver and Judge.

O that all ours may be thine, supported by thy Providence, guided by thy Spirit, and accepted by thy Mercy.

Let our Youth be as Plants watered by the heavenly Dew, growing up in a progressive Meetness for future Happiness.

For WOMEN in Time of Difficulty, &c.

Any of thy Hand-maids pregnant, and waiting for the Season of their Delivery, preserve their Minds from

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from anxious Fear, and enable them to exercise a firm Reliance on thy unchangeable Goodness.

Any of thy Hand-maids drawing near the Hour of Pain and Sorrow, may they experience Mercy suited to their Necessities.

Accept the Praises of thine Hand-maid, whom thou hast preserved in the Hour of Nature's Difficulty, and made the joyful Mother of a living Child; may this, and every Instance of thy Goodness, more impress on her Mind a Resolution to improve them—The Lord restore her to Health and Strength—Spare the Life of the tender Infant, and render it a Blessing to the Parents—May it be early taught to know thee—Be devoted to thy Service, and enjoy the Happiness of thy Favour.

Accept the grateful Acknowledgment of thine Hand-maid, whom thou hast assisted in the difficult Hour, and put a new Song of Praise into her Mouth; Lord, accept her Vows, and enable her to perform them.

For those who are upon a Journey, &c.

O gracious God, accompany with thy Blessing such who travel by Land or Sea, screen them from all melancholy Accidents and calamitous Events.

Those abroad on the dangerous Seas, when they call on thee in their Distresses, have Mercy upon them.

Regard him in particular who is now absent from us on a Journey; may God be present to his Mind, as the Guard of his Actions; and protect and return him in Safety?

We would recommend to thy providential Regard, any who are now entering on a Journey—If thy Presence go not with them, carry them not hence—Give thine Angels Charge concerning them—and let the constant Sense of thy Presence influence their Behaviour—May their Removal from Place to Place remind them of their pilgrimage Estate, and dispose them to act as Persons professing to have Heaven in their View.

Lord

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Lord accept the Praises of thy Servant, whom thou hast preserved in a dangerous Voyage, and enabled to present himself before thee at this Time; may his Gratitude be in a good Measure answerable to his Fears and his Deliverances, and may thy Mercies have a proper Influence on his future Life.

Accept the Praises of thy Servant, whom thro' thy Goodness, thou hast preserved in his late Journey—How many unseen Dangers hath he escaped—How many unfeared Evils hast thou prevented—How many agreeable Accommodations hast thou afforded him—How prosperous hath been his Journey!—And thro' the same kind Providence how happy his Return by meeting all his Family in Health—Lord write the Characters of genuine Gratitude on his Mind, and on all that are Sharers in this Mercy.

TRANSITION to ASCRIPTION.

We would mix the most generous and sublime Joy with our Praises, when we consider the Universe as thy Temple, in every Part of which thou wilt for ever reside, to accept graciously the rational and humble Homage of thy sincere Worshippers.

We now desire sincerely to submit our Requests unto thee in the firm Belief that thou art merciful and gracious, ready to accept and answer our Petitions, so far as is consistent with infinite Wisdom.

Having thus presumed to offer up our Prayers, and pay our Tribute of Praise, we would profess our entire Resignation to thy Will, refer ourselves and our most important Concerns to the Conduct of thy infinite Wisdom, and declare our Hope and Confidence to be founded in thine infinite unchangeable Mercy.

Accept, O thou Father and Source of all Goodness! our imperfect Petitions for ourselves or others, and our united Thankfulness; regard us and our Services according to thine infinite Compassion, we ask it in the Name and as the Disciples of *Jesus Christ*,
who

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who hath taught us when we pray to say Our Father, &c.

These our humble Petitions, we are encouraged to offer up unto thee in comfortable Hope of thy gracious Acceptance, O our heavenly Father.

Now, Lord, what wait we, for our Hope is in thee; dismiss us with thy Blessing, accept us and our Services through *Jesus Christ*, in whose comprehensive Words we conclude our Addresses to thee our Father, &c.

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A S C R I P T I O N.

WE would submit the Prayers we have now offered up in an humble Deference to thy Will, trusting in thine infinite Mercy thro' *Jesus Christ*, for thine is the Kingdom as the only Ruler and Governor of the World! thine is the Power as the Lord God omnipotent; and thine is the Glory, the Victory, and the Majesty for ever and ever. *Amen.*

Thou hast made it our Duty, and we would now with the highest Devotion of Soul ascribe unto thee the supreme Lord of the Universe, the Kingdom, Power, and Glory for ever and ever. *Amen.*

We desire to join the heavenly Choir with the purest Exertion and highest Efforts of our noblest Powers in ascribing unto him that setteth on the Throne, and to the Lamb, Glory, Honour and Thanksgiving for ever and ever. *Amen.*

Thy Glory has been from everlasting; and thine be the Kingdom, the Power, and the Glory for ever. *Amen.*

To thy supreme, thy boundless and inexhaustible Mercy be ascribed by all, on Earth and all in Heaven everlasting Praise. *Amen.*

We would joyfully and triumphantly contemplate the Excellencies of thy Nature, and ascribe unto thee
the

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the original, the supreme, all perfect Deity, (with the highest Affection and Veneration of Soul) the Kingdom, Power and Glory, Might, Majesty and Dominion, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

May thy glorious Name be universally honoured, and all Generations proclaim thy Praise, and may thy Perfections be eternally celebrated by Angels and Men; for thy Dominion is boundless, thy Power and Wisdom is infinite, and thy Goodness universal and unchangeable; and may this Employment be our Dignity and Happiness for ever and ever. *Amen.*

Now unto the King, eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be Glory, Honour and Thanksgiving for ever. *Amen.*

To thee the eternal self-existent Creator of the Universe, whose Will is Nature's Law, omniscient, omnipresent, all bountiful and gracious, be ascribed by all thy Creatures; Thanksgiving and Adoration till Time shall be no more. *Amen.*

Now unto him that is able to keep us from falling, and to present us at last faultless before the Presence of his Glory, with exceeding Joy, to the only wise God our Saviour, be Glory and Majesty, Dominion and Power, both now and for ever. *Amen.*

Now unto him that sitteth upon the Throne and to the Lamb that was slain, and has redeemed us unto God by his Blood, be all Honour and Glory, Dominion and Majesty, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

To thee who livest and reignest for ever, one God; we desire, as thy reasonable Creatures, (and in the Name of Christ) to ascribe supreme unrivalled Glory and everlasting Praise. *Amen.*

May we hereafter join the heavenly Host in one solemn Form of Devotion, with one Heart and one Voice, ascribing Glory to thee as the God of Nature, and the God and Father of *Jesus Christ*, and to him as the great and only Mediator. *Amen and Amen.*

May we be assisted to ascend still higher in the Perfection of our Nature, till at last we shall be closely
and

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and for ever united to thee, O thou God of Love! from whom all Happiness flows, and to whom be rendered by all Beings, endued with Reason, all Honour, Obedience, and grateful Service, both now and for ever. *Amen.*

Now to thee the almighty Creator, the continual Preserver, and the merciful Saviour of all Men; but especially of them that believe be ascribed thro' *Jesus Christ*, everlasting Praise and Glory, Love, Obedience, and Submission, as a Homage due from all thy rational Creatures. *Amen.*

Now unto God, only wise, who art able to keep us from falling, and to lead us in the Paths of Truth and Righteousness, and bring us at last to thy Kingdom and Glory; to thee be Glory in the Churches, through *Jesus Christ*. *Amen.*

Now unto the God of all Grace who hath called us to his Kingdom and Glory, and unto *Jesus Christ*, the faithful Witness and first-begotten of the Dead, the Prince of the Kings of the Earth, who hath loved us and washed us from our Sins in his own Blood, and our ever-living Mediator with God his Father, be Glory and Dominion for ever and ever. *Amen.*

C O N C L U S I O N.

Grace be with all them that love our Lord *Jesus Christ* in Sincerity.

May the God of Peace who brought again from the Dead our Lord *Jesus Christ*, the great Shepherd and Bishop of Souls, make us perfect in every good Work, working in us that which is well pleasing in his Sight, to whom be Glory for ever. *Amen.*

May the Grace of our once dying, but now living Saviour; may the Love of the universal and everlasting Father, may the Fellowship of the divine, immortal Spirit be in Life and Death, and thro' all Eternity with us, and with all the Children of God. We ask it, and we hope for it, for *Christ's* Sake. *Amen* and *Amen.*

F O R M S

FORMS of PRAYER,

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Several eminent Protestant Dissenting MINISTERS, some on special Occasions, taken *verbatim*, in SHORT-HAND, by the EDITOR.

A PRAYER at the Ordination of a MINISTER.

MOST great and glorious God, who existest, independent of all Beings, possessed of eternal, absolute Perfection : We adore thee as the King eternal, immortal, invisible ; as the only wise God, and as the great Creator of Heaven and Earth, and of all Things visible and invisible, whose sovereign Pleasure gave Nature Birth ! Thou spakest, and it was done ; thou commandedst, and it stood fast, and by the efficacious Influences of thy Providence, thou supportest all the Powers of Nature, in their several Connections and Relations, to answer the various important Purposes of their Creation. When we survey the Variety of Creatures around us, we see abundant Proofs, not only of thy Power and Wisdom, but also of thy Goodness ; manifold are thy Works, O Lord, in Wisdom hast thou made them all. The Earth is full of thy Riches. The Voice of Nature and of Providence, the various Instances of thy Goodness, both in the animal and vegetable Creation, so constantly displayed to our View, call upon us to worship thee ; and we most humbly and devoutly acknowledge thee as our Creator, the Former of our Bodies, and the Father of our Spirits — That all the Powers and Faculties

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culties by which we are distinguished and dignified, in the Rank of thy Creation, flow from thee, the inexhaustible Source of Happiness and Perfection; and we would reverence and adore thee, as the supreme Director and Governor of the moral World. Command, O Lord, all the Powers and Faculties of our Minds, into a worshipping Frame and Disposition; and may we seriously remember while we engage in thy worship, that it is impossible for us to impose on thee, who searchest and knowest our Hearts.

We acknowledge and magnify thee, as the Preserver and the Source of Happiness to the Universe; thou openest thine Hand wide, and liberally suppliest the Wants of thy numerous Offspring; and in a more particular Manner thou hast visited us with thy loving-Kindness, through all the changing Scenes of Life: Thy Blessing hath been our Support, and by the Help of God we continue to this Moment Witnesses of thy never-failing Goodness.

We desire to be thankful that Man was created in thine own Image, not only as Head of this lower Creation, but as being capable of the Knowledge of God, his Maker, of imitating thy moral Perfections, and acquiring an Interest in thy Favour. We would be thankful for the Principles of Reason and Conscience implanted in us, and that we are thereby led to the Pursuit of Virtue and true Happiness.—Thus hast thou distinguished us in our Creation, and had we acted more consistent with the Dignity of our Natures, we must have advanced much nearer Perfection, and have much better answered the End of our Being; but we acknowledge that Man being in Honour continued not. Tho' thou madest him upright, he hath sought out many Inventions. How is the pure Gold become dim, how is the fine Gold changed!—How are the noble Faculties of our Souls defaced by impure and evil Customs? So that all Mankind are concluded under Sin, and might have been left of God, exposed to his Wrath and Displeasure; but
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God of his great Love, wherewith he-loved us, hath not forsaken the human Race, but in order to recover Mankind to his original Dignity and Felicity, did send his only begotten Son to execute the Councils of his Wisdom and Grace.

We adore thee for all the Revelations of thy Will to Mankind ; but more especially for that glorious Display of thy Wisdom and Grace in the Gospel of thy Son ; that we live under this unspeakably divine Dispensation (for we are not come unto the Mount that burned with Fire, and unto Blackness and Darknes and the Voice of Words, which Voice they that heard could not bear) but we have the sweet, the amiable, gentle Voice of Truth sounding in our Ears. The most important and interesting Truths manifested by the Son of God himself, in a Way suited to our Capacity, adapted to gain our Attention, and prompt our Reverence and Regard ; that we are come to Mount *Sion*, the City of the living God, the heavenly *Jerusalem* ; and to an innumerable Company of Angels. We desire to be sensible of this Honour and Privilege, to which by the Gospel we are admitted ; that we are led by Faith to a View of those Mansions where Truth and Peace and Happiness prevail : That we are united to the general Assembly, and to the Church of the first born, whose Names are written in Heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and the Spirits of just Men made perfect !—We desire to rejoice in *Jesus*, the Mediator of this new and better Dispensation, through whose glorious Undertakings we have Security for our Deliverance from the Guilt and Punishment of Sin, and participating of that Felicity and Glory which flows at thy right Hand !—We rejoice that this Gospel is confirmed unto us, by indubitable Evidences ; that this great Salvation, not only began to be spoken by the Lord, but was confirmed unto us by them that heard it ; God also bearing them Witness, both with Signs and Miracles and Gifts of the Holy Ghost, with a-

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masing Power and Wisdom.—We desire to be thankful, that the Gates of Hell never yet prevailed against the glorious Designs of divine Grace and Love; the glorious and important Designs of delivering rational Creatures from the Guilt and Condemnation of Sin, and raising them to an Imitation of his own Son, in Purity and Righteousness of Life here, and eternal Happiness in the Life that is to come.

We rejoice in the Views of the more glorious and efficacious; the more powerful and extensive Influences, of this perfect Dispensation, when the Kingdoms of this World shall become the Kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; when the Mountain of the Lord's House shall be established in the Tops of the Mountains, and shall be exalted above the Hills, when Christ shall take to himself his great Power, and reign by the Prevalence of Truth and Righteousness, Peace and Joy in the Earth.

And we rejoice still more, that all these Things shall finally conduce to the everlasting Felicity and Happiness of the Righteous, in the Kingdom of God, which shall never have an End; when all the Designs of the Redeemer's Grace being fully and gloriously accomplished, he shall deliver up the Kingdom to God, even the Father, that God may be all in all.

We would firmly believe and rejoice in the Views of these peculiarly great and important Designs, which we trust are now carrying on.

And we desire to be thankful, that in subserviency to this great Work, when our Lord was called from hence, he substituted Apostles and Ministers in his Stead to beseech Sinners to be reconciled to God. That we have the Writings of these his Apostles, in our Hands, and that they have been transmitted thro' the darkeſt Ages to the present Time, pure and uncorrupt.—We thank thee that we are permitted to read those sacred Oracles, and to judge for ourselves, and that we are allowed to follow the Dictates of our Consciences, and to worship thee in that Way which we
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esteem Truth, without any daring to make us afraid. — That we live under a mild and happy Constitution of Government, in which Christian Liberty is countenanced and defended. And we desire to be thankful, that thou hast called and inclined so many to accept of and engage in the Gospel Ministry, to recommend it to the Belief and Practice of others; and we desire, in the Presence of our Heart-searching God, to look into our Souls, and enquire how we have discharged our Duty, in our public Ministrations, and in our private Preparations for it. O God, we have Reason to lament our Want of Zeal and Steadiness, our many Deviations from the Spirit and Practice of true Religion; that we have felt no more of that Christian Courage and Fortitude, which have animated many others to endure, even unto Death, in Defence of the glorious Principles of our holy Religion. — God forgive us, if through our Means the Gospel itself has been evil spoken of, or the happy Effects and Influences of it have been retarded on others! We beg that we may be inspired with more Love and Tenderness for immortal Souls, with more Desire to promote the Cause of Truth and Righteousness. Convince us of the indispensable Obligations we are under, to discharge our Duty amidst all the Difficulties and Discouragements that may attend us, being animated by the Honour and Dignity of our holy Profession, and with a View of that glorious Reward, which shall be given to all those who watch for Souls, as they who must give Account; that it may be our Happiness not only to save ourselves, but them that hear us. O that these our Prayers might succeed, for all those who attend us this Day, and for those among whom we stately labour! Oh, that the Work of the Lord may prosper in our Hands; that thy People may be edified and built up in Faith and Holiness unto eternal Life: That whilst we are giving up our Accounts, there may be many witnessing to the happy Effects of our Mini-

stry, who may rejoice together with us in Mansions of eternal Glory !

Bless thy Servant who is now before thee with Desire and Design to devote himself to the great and important Work of the Ministry ; may it be with suitable Seriousness, Steadiness, and unfeigned Resolution to promote the important Purposes of the Gospel of *Jesus Christ* ! — Assist us, who are at this Time to be engaged on this solemn Occasion ; may this Service be conducted agreeably to thy Will, and make a strong and lasting Impression upon all who are here bowing down themselves before thee. — The Lord meet us and bless us, in the Ordinances of his House ; let it appear that God is with us of a Truth. — Pardon, O Lord, and accept us thro' thy everlasting Mercy, O our Father who art in Heaven, &c.

A PRAYER joined with Imposition of Hands on the Minister.

ALmighty and everlasting God, with humble Reverence we desire to approach thy sacred Majesty, and pay our chearful Homage unto thee, the God and Father of all, the Author of all our Mercies ; and with all the Powers and Faculties of our Souls, to magnify the Riches of thy Grace in the glorious Scheme of our Redemption and Salvation by *Jesus Christ* ! For ever adored be thy fatherly Goodness, that, in the Fullness of Time, thou didst send the Lord *Jesus Christ* to enlighten, reform, and save a perishing Race ! We rejoice, O father of Mercy, in his Resurrection from the Dead, and Exaltation to Glory ; that our Faith and Hope might be in thee. We will never cease to praise thee, for that great Salvation which at first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by those that heard him ; God also bearing them Witness, both with Signs and Wonders, and with divers Miracles and Gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to thy Will : That our Eyes have seen, that our Ears have heard those Things, that many Prophets and righteous

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ous Men have desired, but could not behold. We humbly adore thy good Providence, that thou hast cast our Lot in a Place where the Light of the glorious Gospel shines around us ; where the Religion of *Jesus* is in general professed, free from the Errors and Superstitions of *Rome*: That whilst many of our Fellow Christians are persecuted for Conscience Sake, we can worship God according to our Consciences, and none dare to molest us. We acknowledge, O heavenly Father, that thy inestimable Favours demand all the Praises our Hearts can conceive, or our Tongues can utter ; and we desire to esteem it our Honour to be employed in preaching the unsearchable Riches of *Christ*, and spreading the Savour of the Knowledge of Christianity among Men ! We would lament, with the deepest Contrition, our Unworthiness in the Discharge of that sacred, important Work ; all our Errors and Neglects of Duty ; all our Weaknesses, as well as our more faulty Allowances, are open to thy Inspection. Forgive, Lord, the Weakness of our Faith, the Languor of our Zeal, and the Lukewarmness of our Love. Yet we trust, O God, that we have in some good Measure preached and taught the Gospel in Sincerity, and that we are willing to spend and be spent for the Promotion of the Truth, as it is in *Jesus*. May a Sense of thy all-seeing Eye and of a future Account, awaken and invigorate all our Powers in thy Service ; and wilt thou, O heavenly Father, enable us more abundantly to be faithful in the Discharge of our important Trust, and to the Souls of Men, that so when we come to the Close of our Lives, we may not only be supported, but triumph in the Views of those distinguished Honours, which will be bestowed on those who have turned many to Righteousness.— Whatever Successes we have had, howsoever we have been enabled to discharge our Duty, O heavenly Father, to thee be ascribed all the Glory ; and as we are sensible that we are passing away apace, that the Seasons of our instructing others is hastening to a close,

we humbly pray, therefore, thou Lord of the Harvest, that thou wouldest send forth more faithful Labourers to supply the Place of such as are going or gone into the other World! — 'Tis our Desire, that the Ministration may be committed to faithful Men.

O gracious God, hear us when we pray, with united Heart and Voice, that thou, Father of Light, wilt enrich this thy Servant with Treasures of Wisdom and Knowledge: We humbly beseech thee send down thy Spirit into his Heart, as a Spirit of Purity, of Wisdom, of Truth, of Prudence, and of Integrity. May he be strong in the Grace of our Lord *Jesus Christ*, that he may approve himself a zealous and faithful Servant to his Lord and Master! Give him more clear and lively Views of that Religion he is to recommend to others, of its Worth and Excellence in its genuine Nature, in its important Doctrines, in its excellent Precepts, and encouraging Motives. Lord, command a Blessing on his private Studies and public Ministrations, that he may approve himself an able Minister, a Workman that need not be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth; exercising that Seriousness, Attention and Diligence, that become one who must hereafter give an Account of himself at the great Tribunal! — Oh! may Love to God, Love to *Christ*, and Love to Souls, animate him in this important Work! And we humbly pray, O heavenly Father! that in the whole Course of his Ministry he may take Heed to himself, that by an undissembled Piety, and never-failing Integrity in Virtue, he may maintain such a worthy and amiable Character, in every State, in every Relation, that the Ministry may not be blamed, and may he have a good Report of all Men, and may all his Labours be crowned with Success. — Lord, open to his Views the Glories of the future, immortal World, as his Encouragement; may he keep his Eyes fixed on that Crown of Glory, which the chief Shepherd will hereafter bestow on those that feed the Flock of God! — May the Blessing of
Almighty

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Almighty God be with him ; may the Grace of *Jesus Christ* prosper him ; may the Aids of thy Spirit support and comfort him, and carry him on successfully, in the Work he has now undertaken, unto his Lives End, and reward him hereafter, with eminent Degrees of Glory ! Wheresoever he may minister, may his Hearers esteem him highly for his Work Sake, and being influenced by his Example to a Life of Faith and Holiness, may they also be his Joy and Crown of Rejoicing, at the Coming of our Lord *Jesus Christ*.

O thou who art the Giver of every good and perfect Gift ! We pray that pure and undefiled Religion may be constantly advancing ! O that the Time would hasten, when the only Contest among Christians shall be, who shall excel in Love and in Usefulness to Mankind ! — O Lord, revive thy Work in the midst of us ! Return we beseech thee, O God of Mercy ! look down from Heaven and behold and visit this Vine. — Let the Beauty of the Lord our God be upon us, and may thy Arm be revealed ! Our humble and ardent Prayer is, that all who Name the Name of *Christ* may be strict Observers of thy Sabbaths ; be devout Worshipers of thee in public and private ; and by their external Behaviour towards all Men, adorn the Doctrine of God their Saviour ; silence the Ignorance of the foolish by their well doing ; that when all the Trials of Mortality are over, we may all meet together in our Father's House, and there join the general Assembly and Church of the first born, in ascribing Honour, and Blessing, and Power to him that sitteth on the Throne, and the Lamb for ever and ever. Now may the God of Peace, that brought again from the Dead our Lord *Jesus Christ*, that great Shepherd of the Sheep, through the Blood of the everlasting Covenant, make us perfect in every good Work ; to do his Will, working in us that which is well pleasing in his Sight, thro' *Jesus Christ*, to whom be Glory both now and for ever. *Amen.*

A PRAYER for a FAST-DAY.

ALMIGHTY Sovereign, who art the universal Creator, the beneficent Preserver, the absolute Proprietor and sole Governor of the World ! who art holy in all thy Ways, and righteous in all the Dispensations of thy Providence ! O God, we acknowledge thy Perfections to be eternal and unchangeable ! Thou art the great Governor and Judge among the Nations : Thou ordainest the Laws of Nature, and rulest all the Causes that exist, in such Manner as may best answer the wise Purposes of thy supreme, universal Government ! Notwithstanding the Vicissitudes of Nature and Time they were created for thy Pleasure, and are subservient to thy Will. We would reverence thee as the Superintendent of the Universe, that notwithstanding the various Revolutions and Events that take Place in the different Nations of the World : The Righteous are always under the Protection and Care of thy Providence ! That even in the most discouraging Appearances, nothing shall terrify us, for the Wrath of Man shall praise thee, and the Remainder of Wrath shalt thou restrain ! Thine, O Lord, is the Greatness and the Majesty, and the Victory ! Thou hast given us the most convincing Proofs of thy providential Goodness to these Lands ; our Fathers have told us what great Things thou hast done in their Days ; and our Eyes also have seen thy Salvation, and we have abundant Reason at this Time to bless and Praise thy Name, for all the Privileges we enjoy under a wise and righteous Administration ; that our civil and religious Rights are hitherto secured and defended ! We desire to be thankful, that when these have been in Danger of being invaded and subverted ; when formidable and subtle Foes have premeditated and threatened our Ruin, and risen up against us ; thy right Hand, and thy holy Arm, hast in a very conspicuous Manner subdued our Enemies, dissipated our Fears, and

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and turned our Mourning into Joy! While we sympathize with our Neighbours in their Distresses, we cannot but thankfully reflect on the Blessings we enjoy, and rejoice that our Towns and Cities are not made desolate; that our Habitations are not destroyed by Fire; that our Houses are not a Prey to savage Cruelty; that we enjoy the Benefits of civil and religious Society, and are permitted to worship God, according to the Dictates of our Consciences, and none dare to make us afraid. Thou hast not cut off our Herds from the Stall, but hast restored Health to our Cattle, and enabled us to rejoice in the Midst of Plenty! — O Lord, we desire to be thankful for those Instances of Success, which thou hast lately given us against our Enemies! Thou hast taught our Fleets and our Armies to fight, and hast given Courage in the Day of Battle: Thou, Lord, hast been on our Side, so that Success has crowned their Endeavours: We acknowledge, () Lord, it is not for what we have done, but for thy Name Sake thou hast dealt thus favourably with us. — But we have Reason, with the deepest Contrition of Soul, to take Shame to ourselves; for we are a sinful Nation, a People laden with Iniquity: Thou hast nourished and brought us up, but we have rebelled against thee. The Ox knoweth his Owner, and the Ass his Master's Crib; but *Israel* doth not know, thy People doth not consider! Against thee, against thy sovereign Authority, against thy righteous Laws, we have sinned, and done evil in thy Sight! We have abused thy Long-suffering and Forbearance, and though thou hast often invited and encouraged us to return unto thee, we have not returned unto the Lord, nor shewn our Gratitude for the Benefits we have received! Our Sins are so many, and so highly aggravated, that we have Reason to tremble for Fear of thee, and to be afraid of thy righteous Judgments. How have we slighted thy Mercies, how have we abused our Plenty by Luxury? how have we turned the Grace of God into Wantonness,

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and neglected the great and glorious Privileges, which by the Gospel are conferred upon us : And when thy Hand hath appeared in our Favour, bringing Salvation unto us, how little have we regarded the Operation of thy Hand, and when we have sung thy Praise, how soon, alas ! have we forgotten thy Works ! How justly mightest thou have said, My Spirit shall no longer strive with a wicked, ungrateful Generation. But it is our unspeakable Happiness, that there is Mercy with thee, O God ! that thou mightest be feared, and Judgment is thy strange Work ! Still we are encouraged to come before thee, and we have more than a Peradventure, that if we turn and repent thou wilt have Mercy upon us. O that this Day we may humble ourselves, and seek thy Face with a suitable Earnestness ; and, O gracious God, when we come before thee in this Place, and on these solemn Occasions, make Prayer and Supplication ; then hear from Heaven, thy Dwelling-Place, and forgive. For thy Mercy Sake, O Lord, for thy Name Sake, spare thy Heritage, give us not up to the Reproach of our Enemies ! Oh, that this Day our King, our Princes, our Nobles, and all the Inhabitants of this Land who profess to prostrate themselves before thee, may do it with such a Reverence of thy Majesty, with such ingenuous Sorrow, and Humiliation, in the Sense of their past Sins, with such fixed Resolutions of Amendment, as to obtain thy Blessing ! O, that none of us may dare to trifle with God, in these solemn Services ; but may our Hearts be deeply affected and engaged ! May we sanctify the Lord our God, and make thee our Fear and Dread ; whatever we do, may we be afraid of incurring the divine Displeasure ! For, O Lord God, who can stand the Fury of thine Indignation ? But if thou art on our Side, though the Mountains shake, and the Pillars of the Earth are removed ; the Lord of Hosts being our Refuge, we shall not be dismayed, but will trust in the Lord our God, and stay ourselves on the most high ; that this may be our Happiness, we would
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most humbly recommend to God all our Concerns as a Nation. O thou who art supreme Governor among the Nations, over-rule the Hearts of Princes, and let the present Contentions and Desolations of War come to an End. Give Peace in our Day, O Lord.

We would particularly recommend to thy favourable Regard, thy Servant, our sovereign King GEORGE, bless him with long Life, crown him with Glory and Honour; as thou hast given him the Hearts of his Subjects; may his Enemies fall before him; may the Lord be his Confidence and Refuge, and let him joy in thy Salvation.

Bless all the Royal Family, inspire their Minds with the most noble and generous Sentiments; may they have such Regard to Religion, and to the Rights and Liberties of Mankind, as may secure their Honour and Renown, and final Acceptance with God the Judge of all.

Council his Majesty's Counsellors, preside in the great Assembly of Parliament; let them be in Truth, the Guardians of our Liberties, civil and sacred, and may every Measure, wisely calculated, be steadily pursued, and give Fortitude and Courage to our Fleets and Forces, that our Enemies seeing the Wisdom and Unanimity of our Councils, and the Success of our Measures, may be influenced to accede to such Terms for a general Peace, as may be equitable, honourable, and lasting.

To effect this important, this desirable End, we farther pray, thou wilt strengthen the Hearts and Hands of our Friends and Allies abroad, and may all their Measures demonstrate, that they are engaged in the Cause of Liberty and Truth, and aiming at the Restoration and Establishment of Peace.

And now, O Lord God, we most humbly pray, that thou wilt bless the Solemnities of this Day; may our professed Humiliation produce a real and extensive Reformation! — We desire to confess our own Hearts before thee; we would open our Consciences in thy Sight,

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Sight, and we wish to remain humble under the Consciouſness of all our Imperfections and Sins, and to form the most solemn Resolutions that we will go and Sin no more. Bless thy Word that may be spoken, at this Time, that it may come with divine Power and Efficacy on our Hearts; that by this and every such solemn Opportunity we may be made wiser and better. We ask all in the Name of *Jefus Christ*, for whom we bless thee, and in whose comprehensive Words we farther call upon thee, O our Father.

A THANKSGIVING PRAYER.

O Thou, who art supremely Great and Good, the Source of all Being and Power, of all Excellence, Dignity and Happiness; and the worthy Object of the supreme Love and Delight of all intelligent Beings.—We esteem it the nobleſt Exercise of our Powers and Faculties, to be employed in thy Service, in contemplating and adoring the tranſcendent, immutable Perfections of thy Nature; and tho' we cannot praise thee with the Tongues of Angels, nor arrive at their exalted Strains of Devotion; permit us, O thou propitious Deity, after our feeble, imperfect Manner to celebrate thy Praise! Lord, assist us to glorify thee, with the most devout Affections, as a Being of unspotted Holiness, of perfect, infallible Knowledge, of unerring and consummate Wisdom, of diffusive and impartial Goodness. And we desire joyfully and devoutly to adore thee, for all the Displays of thy Perfections!—Thy powerful Hand, thine inimitable Skill reared the vast Fabric of the Universe, and established the Laws of its Government.—Thou hast spread out the Canopy of the Heavens, and lighted up those Lamps that adorn it. The Heavens are thine, the Earth also is thine, the Sea, and the Fullness thereof! Thou hast formed the innumerable Creatures that exist therein, and hast made Provision for their Support, Satisfaction and Happiness, suitable

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to their Natures. Thou hast called us into Being, on purpose to make us Partakers of thy Beneficence in the present World, and of immortal Felicity in the next.—We adore thee, that for these valuable and important Ends, we were endowed with rational and moral Powers, and that thou hast conferred on us such other Privileges and Advantages, as are abundantly sufficient to our Happiness. We adore thee, as our constant Preserver and unwearied Benefactor; and as the universal Father, who art continually scattering his Blessings through his whole Family, and making the Out-goings of the Morning and Evening to rejoice. We thank God for the Blessings of a spiritual and divine Nature; that thou didst send thy Son into the World as the Messenger of Love, of Grace and Truth. That he came to enlighten a benighted, and to die for a guilty World; and that when he had finished the important Work thou didst honour him by raising him from the Dead, and exalting him to thy right Hand, and that this same Jesus will come the second Time to be glorified in his Saints, and to the Salvation of *all* that obey him! We contemplate with Wonder, and with Joy, the Dispensation of the Gospel, wherein thy great and glorious Perfections shine with native and resplendent Lustre; and whereby we are encouraged to Religion, by the most noble and animating Motives. We thank God for the Impressions it has made on our Minds, through the gracious Influences of thy Spirit.

We rejoice, that not only ourselves, but so great a Part of the human Species, have been favoured with this Gospel, and that we have the pleasing Hope, that its Light and Influences will be much farther extended. O Lord, how diffusive is thy Beneficence! What shall we render unto the Lord, for all the Benefits bestowed upon us! We would not only praise thee with our Lips, but in our Lives, and let the Language of devout Obedience express the Gratitude of our Hearts. More especially, at this Season, we would call upon
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all the Powers and Capacities of our Souls, to magnify thy Name, on Account of many signal Instances of thy Providence, in our Favour : Verily, thou hast put a new Song of Praise into our Mouths, for thy right Hand, and thy holy Arm, hath gotten us the Victory ! This is the Lord's Doings, and it is marvelous in our Eyes ! O suffer not our Successes and our Conquests to render us vain and presumptuous ; but may they inspire us with Gratitude, and engage us to place our Trust and Confidence in thee, our God. May our Conquests not tempt us to tyrannize and oppress ; but may we practise that Humanity and Equity, which is an Ornament to the Christian Character, and the Glory of a Protestant Country.—We thank God, for the happy Constitution of our Government ; for the Enjoyment of our religious Privileges, and Civil Rights and Liberties ! We rejoice, that we hear not the Alarms of War ; that we feel not the Calamities and Desolations of the Sword : Accept, O Father of Mercy, our united Thankfulness, for the present Prospect we have of Plenty, that our Garners will be filled with Wheat, and our Meadows so cloathed with Grass, as to yield Sustenance for our Cattle. Verily, thou hast not dealt so bountifully with any Nation ; and as for thy Judgments, we have not known them. O may it enkindle a proper Warmth of grateful Affection, and be engraven, in indelible Characters, on our Hearts.

But, O God, while we thus contemplate the Wonders of thy Works, the Beneficence of thy Providence, the Excellency of thy Government, and rejoice in our Privileges, as Men and as Christians ; with what Shame, and Contrition of Soul, should we confess our personal, and our national Unworthiness ? We have undervalued thy sacred Laws, slighted thy gracious Calls, and not improved that Goodness of thine, which is the Support and Comfort of our Lives. How much of Pride and Presumption ; how much of Luxury, Vanity

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nity and Folly abound, and how greatly does the Love of sensual Pleasure prevail, in Violation of thy sacred Laws, the Neglect of public Worship, and of social Duties? And we most humbly supplicate at the Throne of thine everlasting Mercy, that thou wilt interpose by the Methods of thy Providence, and by the gracious Influences of thy Spirit, to reform and reclaim us. Impress on our Minds a more habitual Seriousness, a greater Reverence of thy Name, thy Laws, and Government; and establish in us a Sense of our Obligations to Religion. Inspire us with the most ingenuous and animating Principles of Gratitude. Let it be the Language of our Souls, when shall we come and appear before God, and enjoy more devout Inter-course with him? When shall we know more of thy transcendent Excellencies, and Love thee with greater Ardour? When shall we attain to a nearer Resemblance of thee, and arrive at such confirmed, and unquestionable Hopes in thy Favour, that amidst all the Vicissitudes and Trials of this Life, we may rejoice in the Prospect of future Glory? And while we profess to love thee as our present Guardian and Friend and future Portion; oh! that our Hearts may be inspired with a generous good Will to all our Fellow-Creatures, rejoicing in every Addition to their Happiness, and in every Opportunity of our contributing thereto! As we have professed ourselves to be the Followers of God, and the Disciples of *Jesus Christ*, may we be fortified by the Power and Influence of his Doctrines, against all the Allurements and Vanities of this World! That whatever others do, it may be the fixed, unalterable Resolution of our Souls, till we die we will never remove our Integrity; that our Hearts may not reproach us so long as we live; and in our last Hours may our Memory be strong, our Conscience clear, our Faith lively, and our Departure serene and happy.

O thou supreme King and Governor of the World, we desire at this Time humbly to present our Intercessions in Behalf of the whole human Race! When,

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O Lord, shall the Time come, when Earth shall resemble Heaven, in the Practice of Righteousness, Truth, and Peace? When shall *Pagan* Darkeness, and *Mahometan* Delusion, and *Popish* Superstition, be dissipated by the glorious Influences of Christianity? — Lord hasten the Downfall of *Babylon*; and let Liberty, Truth, and Peace universally prevail! Especially regard the Nations of *Great Britain* and *Ireland*! Bless our lawful, our rightful Sovereign, *George* the Third, may he have Wisdom as an Angel of God, whereby he may support the Dignity, and answer the End of Government, be abundantly happy in himself, and useful to all his Subjects. Bless every Branch of that illustrious House. Mercifully regard all Ranks and Degrees of Men, more particularly those Societies united to promote Religion and the civil and religious Liberties of Mankind. Succeed the Ministration of the Gospel in this Place; may it be productive of much Good, that God in all Things may be glorified. Pity the Afflicted, relieve the Distressed, comfort the Dejected, and compose the disordered in Mind. Remember those that are in Bonds, especially for Conscience Sake: Pity the Parents who mourn the Loss of Children; make up the Want of outward Comfort by the Consolations of thy Spirit. Pardon, O gracious God, the Imperfections that have attended us at this Time: Hear our Requests; accept our Thanksgiving, according to thine infinite Wisdom and everlasting Mercy, thro' our Lord *Jesus Christ*; for him we bless thee, and through whom we ascribe unto thee the King eternal, immortal, invisible, and only wise God, Glory, Honour and Thanksgiving, for ever and ever! *Amen.*

A PRAYER preceding a FUNERAL DISCOURSE.

O Thou who art the eternal, inexhaustible, and immutable Source of all Being, Comfort and Happiness! From this Abode of Frailty, Uncertainty and Death, would we raise our Souls, to that Seat of Glory and Immortality, where thou livest and reignest for ever

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ever and ever ! Happy for us, that amidst all the Vicissitudes and Changes of the present World ; all whose Pleasures, all whose Prospects are precarious and perishing, there is a Heaven beyond the Grave, where our Father, and our Saviour, are alive, and lives for evermore ! Where every Thing that can delight and satisfy the Mind is to be found in the highest Perfection, beyond the Power of Chance, and the Reach of Change ! As by one Man came Death, so blessed be God, one greater Man hath conquered Death ; hath triumphed over the Grave, and by his once offering up himself a Sacrifice to God, hath for ever perfected those who are sanctified ; and we trust, that amidst all the Vicissitudes and Vexations of Mortality, he will carry us through all the distressing Feelings of Humanity, and all the Fears and Terrors of Death, to Regions of eternal Life and Joy ! — When we look back upon our past Lives, when we reflect on the Experiences we have had of the mutable, uncertain, unsatisfying Nature of all earthly Enjoyments : When we see our nearest Friends, and the best of Christians, while we see Disease and Death visit the Palace of the King as well as the College of the Peasant, we should be overwhelmed with Sadness and with Sorrow ; but for the Views which our Saviour hath opened, and for the Hopes which his Gospel hath inspired : That though we are not to live here for ever, and though the Time is hastening apace, when this Earth, with all its Beauties, shall be dissolved ; when the Elements shall melt with fervent Heat, and even the Heavens themselves sink into one universal, stupendous Chaos.—That amidst all this Confusion of Elements ; this Wreck of Nature and of Worlds, we were made to live for ever in some happier and nobler State of Existence ; that we are ascertained, that in our Father's House there are many Mansions. That our Redeemer still liveth, that he ascended to prepare a Place for us, and though, after Death, Worms destroy this Flesh, yet in these Bodies we shall see God, to our everlasting Consolation and Joy. Blessed be thy Name,

that though all Things here are fallible, momentary and perishing; there is a House prepared for us, eternal in the Heavens: That this hope is implanted in the original Frame of our Minds, and confirmed by the Gospel of thy Son!

O eternal Father, may these Thoughts ever possess us. Let not the Business, let not the Blandishments of Life exclude them; but may we remember that we have here no continuing City, and are formed, are directed, and encouraged to seek one that is to come! May these Ideas be impressed on us at all Times; but more especially at such Seasons, so mournful and so affecting! Preserve us from that Vanity and Levity of Temper, which is too apt to attend us, and hinder our serious Reflection and consequent Improvement: But may the awakening, invigorating Impressions of Mortality, be a constant Incentive to us to prepare for our latter End, that if we live we may live unto Christ, and for us to die may be great gain! — We would not regard the Time or Place, or Manner of our Departure. We refer it to thy unerring Wisdom and Beneficence. But grant that we may depart in Peace, our Eyes having seen, our Hearts having felt thy Salvation! — May Integrity and Truth preserve us, may Wisdom and Discretion conduct us, may a clear Conscience constantly revive us, may the Smiles of Heaven ever rejoice us! — May we be under a better Direction than that of Nature, than that of Custom, than even that of uninstructed Reason alone! May he who died and arose, and lives for ever, be our Guide in Virtues pure and peaceful Path, thro' Life, at Death; and conduct us, to those Regions, where we shall repose serene, till the Morning of the Resurrection Day, and then may that Body, which was sown in Dishonour, be raised in Glory; which was sown in Weakness, be raised in Power; which was sown a natural Body, be raised a spiritual Body; and our immortal Souls be reunited to their ancient, but improved Habitation! May we live for ever with the
Lord,

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Lord, and join the celestial Assembly in devout Ascription to the supreme God, for ever and ever !

O thou universal Father, we would not confine our Petitions with regard to this World or the next, to ourselves alone, but would recommend to thy Mercies the great Family of Mankind : The Church of our Lord *Jesus Christ*, and the Country in particular to which we belong. We would pray for Peace universally, for the Peace of thy Church, and for the Peace of *Great Britain*, and the Nations at War ! We lament the Miseries of this warring World, and we beseech thee to put a speedy Period to Devastations and Calamities, so affecting to Humanity ! To this End, O Lord our God, pour out thy Blessing upon his Majesty King *George*, and all the Branches of his illustrious House ! Watch over our mild and equal Government ; protect our wise and righteous Laws ; maintain our invaluable Privileges, civil and religious ; promote a general Spirit of Seriousness, of Industry, of Sobriety, of Humanity, of brotherly Love, of public Zeal, of universal Goodness, through the whole Land, especially thro' this great City ! May all Ranks and Degrees of Men be inspired with Principles suited to their respective Stations and the public Good ! May the Ministers of the everlasting Gospel, of every Denomination, be found faithful, as they must answer it at the great Tribunal of their Master and Judge ! whilst we see our Brethren and Ministers passing into the invisible World : May we consider the solemn Call to attend to the important Office, and promote to the utmost of our Power, that Kingdom of God which consists not in Meats and Drinks, but in Righteousness, and Peace, and Joy in the Holy Ghost ! May we have that Peace which (through the Grace of the Gospel) arises from the Attestation of an honest and upright Heart ; the Reflection on a Life spent agreeably to the Will of Heaven, animated by the Prospects which Religion inspires ! — O Lord our God, we feel that we are dying Creatures ; but

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we rejoice that we have immortal Spirits, and that there is a Day coming, when all thy Children shall meet the Spirits of just Men made perfect ; that great Assembly of the redeemed and the angelic World, and join with them in a more refined Worship, than frail and imperfect Humanity is now capable of ! Assist thy poor Servant in the Service before him ! Inspire us all with the strongest Feelings, both of Mortality and of Immortality ! We ask every Blessing, for Time and for Eternity in his Name, who hath taught us when we pray to say, Our Father, &c.

A GENERAL PRAYER, including Thanksgiving for Deliverance from a sudden and dreadful Fire.

O Almighty and everlasting God, who art the Original of all Being, and the Fountain of all Good, whose watchful, beneficent Providence is over all thy Works, and whose essential and immutable Goodness is the Security and Comfort of all thy rational Creation, amidst all the Vicissitudes of Life. We acknowledge that thy Providence is universal, as extensive as the Creatures that do exist, and as the various Events that can take Place ; and that thou art the supreme, universal Governor of all Worlds.—It is our Comfort and Happiness that the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth in the Earth, whose Power is always regulated by consummate Wisdom and invariable Goodness, to whose Direction and Controul all public Concerns, that are of Importance to the Interest of Religion and the Good of Mankind, are absolutely subject, and on whom the Happiness of every Individual depends. How excellent is thy Loving-kindness, O Lord ; how many are thy wonderful Works, and how precious are thy Thoughts to us ward !

We thankfully acknowledge the Share we have had in thy all-powerful Protection ; thou hast sheltered us from many threatening Evils and Accidents, whereby many others have been deprived of their valuable

able Enjoyments in Life, and guarded us against innumerable others to which we are subject. We have renewed Experience of thy Power to save, and of thy Goodness to bless us.

We thankfully acknowledge thy signal Providence the Night past*, that when surrounded with imminent Danger, and devouring Flames came near our Dwellings, not only our Lives but our Habitations, and our most valuable Comforts are still preserved; and that we are still possessed of those reasonable Powers and Capacities of considering thy Goodness, of being inspired with Gratitude, and of presenting ourselves thus before thee, to make Mention thereof.

We are sensible, O Lord, we often forget thy Mercies, and disregard the Instances of thy providential Care, because they are constant, as though thou didst it not.—We reflect on it with Shame, and we would repent of our Ingratitude, giving it in Charge to our Souls never more to forget that kind indulgent Providence on which we depend. — In the most affecting influencing Sense of thy Goodness, we would present and devote ourselves this Morning a holy, living, acceptable Sacrifice. — And while our Minds are in some Measure affected with the Worth of present Enjoyments; may we rise to more sublime Degrees of Love and Devotion under the Sense of superior Grace, and more elevated Prospects. — Who can sufficiently display the Riches of that Grace conveyed to us in the Gift of thy Son, in all the Prerogatives of a Saviour, and the invaluable Blessings of his Redemption. — Through whom thou forgivest our Sins, healeth all our Diseases, redeemest us from Destruction, crowneth us with Loving-kindness, and with tender Mercies; regardeth us as thy Children, and constitutes us the Heirs of immortal Life.

* On Occasion of a dreadful Fire.

We thank God that we are interested in this Grace; that thou didst send thy Son to raise and establish in us the cheerful triumphant Hope of an happy Immortality. Grant, O God, that a lively, influencing Faith in the glorious Promises of the Gospel may produce an ardent Concern for our Happiness, by a Conformity to thy Will, and an Imitation of thy moral Perfections, as displayed in the bright and resplendent Pattern of thine own Son; sensible that our Happiness must arise from the Knowledge, the Imitation and Favour of God, our Maker: May we also frequently contemplate the Effects of thy stupendous Love, that our Souls may be raised to a divine Complacency, and render the Practice of religious Duties our greatest Pleasure and Delight. May we value and regard the good Things of this Life according to their real Nature, and use them in Subservience to our Pursuit of more sublime and durable Happiness. — In the firm Persuasion of the Wisdom and Goodness of thy Providence, may we disburthen our Minds of all anxious Fear and Sollicitude about present Things, referring ourselves to thy Care, and hoping and trusting in thy Mercy, as our almighty and all-sufficient Saviour. — Assist us to cultivate every Disposition that is suitable to our Relation, Connection, and Station in the World; governing all our Conduct towards others by the everlasting and immutable Rules of Justice, Equity, Charity and Goodness. — May all our Passions be ever under the Influence of Reason and Religion. — We would humbly submit ourselves to thy Care and Guidance; and we trust, that by enjoying the gracious Concurrence of thy Spirit, in Faith, and in Obedience to the sacred Truths and Dictates of thy Word; we may also embrace the Promises and rejoice in Hope of future Glory.

O thou who art the universal Parent, hear us when we pray with united Heart and Voice in behalf of all Mankind; enlighten the remotest Parts of the Earth with the Knowledge of the one living and true God,
and

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and of *Jesus Christ*; and where Christianity has been perverted by Persecution, Superstition and Enthusiasm, interpose, O thou Lover of Souls, to put a Stop to the Malice of Persecution, and the Folly of Enthusiasm; and may Peace and Truth, Virtue and Happiness, more generally prevail.

O thou supreme Arbiter of Life and Death, who hast, in thy unerring unfathomable Wisdom, taken to thy Mercy our late most gracious Monarch, * and in thy beneficent Providence, advanced to the Throne of these Realms our lawful, our rightful Sovereign King *George III.* we most humbly pray, that he may be endued with such Wisdom, Integrity, and Fortitude, as may render him the Glory of the Protestant Succession, the Guardian of our holy Religion, the Support and Defender of all our Rights, Privileges and Property.

Bless the Princess Dowager of *Wales*, the Dukes, the Princesses, and every Branch of that illustrious House; form them for Usefulness, Honour, and Happiness.

Prosper all that are employed in any public and important Trust, those especially who share in the Administration; may they be zealous Promoters of Virtue, of Liberty, and of Happiness, to all who are under their Influence, or subject to their Authority. Continue to us the Blessings of Plenty in our Borders, and let there be Peace in our Day, O Lord. Regard, more especially, such who are under any Kind of Distress and Unhappiness of Body or Mind, and suit thy Mercies to their particular Circumstances. Hear, O gracious God, and in much Mercy regard the Prayers, and accept the Thanksgivings, that have at this Time (we trust with Sincerity of Soul) been offered up. Assist us, in our farther Attendance, on thy Word; may it be with becoming Seriousness, and may we so hear, that our Souls may live: We ask it, for thy Mercy Sake, through *Jesus Christ* our Lord;

* October 25, 1760.

in

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in whose Words, we would conclude our present Addresses. O, our Father, &c.

A GENERAL PRAYER.

INFINITE Jehovah! Infinite in every glorious, in every adorable, in every amiable Perfection and Attribute, that can claim the Affections of a reasonable Creature! In whom Power never degenerates to Tyranny, nor Wisdom into Craft; Justice into Severity, nor Mercy into Weakness; but in whom all those divine Qualities act for ever in perfect Order and Harmony; forming the fairest and grandest Character that can exist in Heaven itself! Thy Name alone is excellent, thy Glory fills both the Earth and Heavens! Not confined to this small Spot, but thy unbounded Benevolence extends throughout universal Nature: Wherever there is Being, there thy Power is felt, there thy Wisdom is seen, and there, above all, thy Goodness triumphs: But so far as we know, it is only the Children of Men who have tasted of thy Mercy, of that Mercy which is the Foundation of all our Hopes; which is the Fountain of all our Joy, for Time, and for Eternity.—O thou most attractive beneficent Deity! Whilst we celebrate thy Glory—The beauty of thy Works, and thy bounty to thy Creation, may our Hearts grow warm within us, may every Sentiment of Humility, of Modesty; and, at the same Time, of Joy, of ingenuous, filial and sovereign Joy, flow from our Bosoms, and rise in one continued Flame, towards the Throne where Mercy dwells!—O most high God, be merciful to us this Day! We fly from the Court of strict Justice, from severe Rectitude, to the Seat where forgiving Compassion reigns for evermore!—We would now supplicate at the Footstool of the Throne of Grace, in the great, the endearing Name of thy Son; of him who died for us, who rose again, and who ever liveth to make Intercession for us! We implore Pardon, we
implore

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implore Grace, of the Father of Mercy, of the Friend of Mankind?—O thou righteous Judge of all the Earth, enter not into strict Judgment with us; for in thy Sight no Flesh living can be justified: But in the Multitude of thy tender Mercies, blot out our Transgressions, heal our Backslidings, and Love us freely! Say unto us, by the Communications of thy Spirit, Son be of good Cheer, thy Sins are forgiven thee! In the pleasing Faith, and chearing Hope, of thy propitious Divinity; permit us, one Day, to stand in white Robes, before the great white Throne, having washed our Garments, and made them white in the Blood of the Lamb! We approach thy Majesty, this Morning, with all the humble Confidence, with all the grateful Joy, that Nature can feel, or that Religion can inspire!—May we see the Excellency, admire the Beauty, and feel the Energy of these most ingenuous Principles of the human Mind, even Love and Gratitude, Faith, Hope and Joy!—We thank thee, and we wish we could thank thee in nobler Strains, for thy Love to Mankind;—For thy Generosity to our Friends, for thy Bounty to all Mankind! For that Mercy, revealed in and by Jesus Christ, (whose Name we will ever contemplate, with Delight and Joy!—For that Mercy, which is this Day leading ten Thousand Times ten Thousand Spirits, thro' this World of Trials, up to the Paradise of God! There! There! will we hope to dwell, where we hope to see thy Face, where we hope to cast our Crowns before the Throne, and to say, worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive Glory and Honour, Dominion and Power, and Praise; who hath loved us, who hath washed us in his own Blood, and hath made us Kings and Priests unto God; even the Father, and who will reign over us himself for evermore!—Grant, most gracious Deity, that the Manifestations thou hast made, of thy superlative Glory and Dignity, and of thy transcendent Benignity, thro' Jesus Christ our Lord, may produce the noblest and worthiest

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worthiest Impressions on our Minds : That we may be ashamed to do any Thing base, to do any Thing mean and unworthy, or any Thing beneath the Elevation of our rational and christian Character, or the grandeur of our future Prospects ! May the Love of Jesus constrain us ! May the Grace of the Spirit inspire us ! May the Wisdom of thy Providence direct us ! May the Energies of God sustain us ! May we feel ourselves supported, beyond the mere Power of Nature, by a higher Power than Nature knows, in our Enterprizes after Perfection and Immortality !—O most gracious God, we implore thine Aid, thy Light ; without it, how shall we wing our Way through the intricate Paths and devious Deserts of Humanity ? Without it, how shall we keep the Road that leads to the Garden of God ? But, under thy Conduct, under the Guidance of thy Spirit, which our Saviour hath promised all his Votaries, we trust we shall be able, in due Time, to arrive beyond this Labyrinth of Life, into the open Day of unceasing Light and uninterrupted Joys !

We desire to remember, before thee, all Mankind ; our Brethren in Frailty, Uncertainty and Distress ! O pity thy great Family below, and shew them Favour ! If thy Wisdom shall see it fit, extend the Communications of thy Goodness and of thy Grace, in Jesus Christ, and spread the Triumphs of his Cross, from one End of the World to the other ; that all Nations may be blessed in Jesus, and all Nations may call him blessed.

We intreat thee to reform the Protestant Churches, to unite them amongst themselves ! Banish the Spirit of Party, of Enthusiam, of Superstition, of Persecution, of Bigotry, and of Uncharitableness ! Pour down the Spirit of Grace and Love, exemplified in the Son of the God of Love !

In a particular Manner, we pray for our dear and our honoured Country—We would be truly grateful for the great Things thou hast done for this Nation—
for

for the Form and Constitution of equitable Government, established by our Predecessors, and continued, pure and uncorrupt, to this Time ! O may it be preserved and transmitted such, to latest Posterity !

Look down upon our gracious Sovereign King *George*, establish his Throne in Righteousness, and in the Hearts of his People !—May he live long, the Father and the Blessing of his Subjects ; and when thou shalt put an End to his mortal Life, may he be crowned with an immortal Diadem of Glory, in the Presence of God !—We recommend to the Protection and Favour of God, the Princess Dowager of *Wales*, the Dukes, the Princesses, and every Branch of their illustrious Issue ; endue them with every princely Quality, and with every Christian Virtue.

Preserve every good Principle and Disposition which any in the Administration of Government may possess uncorrupt amidst the Degeneracy, amidst the Folly, amidst the Infection, of a gay unthinking Multitude !

Bless our Magistracy, our Ministers, our Gentry, our Merchants, even the whole Body of the Nation, of every Rank and Character !

Especially we beseech thee, O most merciful God, to regard the Ministers of the everlasting Gospel ; may they feel the Power, admire the Beauty, and reverence the Authority of divine immortal Things ! O that they were inspired with the primæval Candour, comprehensive and divine Spirit, of that Religion which they have the Honour to preach ; and that no Object this World can present, may ever appear to them worthy of their Approbation and Pursuit ; but spreading the Triumphs of the Redeemer's Love and Grace—and restoring Man to the Love and Practice of Righteousness, and to the Joys of Immortality !

We would, in particular, intreat, that the most High would dwell in this Christian Society, that they may all possess the genuine Spirit of Christianity ; and, if it may be consistent with the wise Methods of thy Providence, to succeed the Endeavours of thy Servant,
who

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who with Pleasure ministers to this People, it shall inspire his Soul with the warmest Gratitude—may he have the Happiness, the Honour—may he obtain Mercy to be found faithful, and abundantly successful, in this thy Vineyard!—O touch his Heart with a lively Coal from thy Altar, to inflame it with Zeal and Charity!—Inspire his Lips with Truth, with Eloquence and Argument! and, whilst we are preaching to others the Truths and Duties of Religion, may it never be our Misery and Infamy to miss that great Salvation, which is the ultimate End of our Being and our Wishes!

Open the Hearts of thy People, to receive the Truth in the Love of it, and to bring forth the peaceable and amiable Fruits of it!

To this End, prosper our Arms by Sea and Land, and those of our Allies in the different Parts of the World.

Have Mercy upon this great City—have a merciful Regard to the bleeding Desolation of War, and send down that benevolent and humane Disposition, which may put a speedy Check to the Effusion of Blood!

Above all, we implore thy divine Presence and Grace; that Presence which makes Heaven, and that Inspiration which makes Saints, that we may learn to live in Love and Peace, and in the Comforts of the Holy Ghost; and, when we come to die, O thou who art the Author of our Nature, the Father of our Spirits, be not far from us; but in that dubious, critical Hour, stand by us, sustain our sinking Spirits, and enable us to act our last Part nobly!—What thou knowest to be further necessary, or fit for us, bestow, tho' we have not asked it! What thou knowest to be unfit with-hold, tho' in much Weakness we may have ask'd it! That, only, which thou, all-wise and good, see'st to be best for us, grant, now and evermore, for his Sake; for whom, we thank thy glorious Name; and, in whose Words, we farther say, with all the Reverence and all the Gratitude we can feel, or express! Our Father, &c.

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A GENERAL PRAYER.

O Lord God Almighty, the Possessor of Heaven and Earth! who sitteth on thy Throne supreme and everlasting, and doest whatsoever pleaseth thee, both in Heaven and in Earth! we desire to prostrate ourselves humbly before the Foot-stool of thy Majesty, acknowledging and adoring thee, as a Being of incomprehensible Glory, and absolute Perfection; as a Being self-existent and independent, the kind indulgent Parent of the Universe, and worthy Object of the supreme Love and Delight of all intelligent Beings! We adore thee, as the Source of all Being and Power, of all Excellency, Dignity and Happiness; who hast, in a most stupendous Manner, displayed the Excellency of thy Nature in all thy Works. The Heavens declare thy Glory, all Nature proclaims thy Perfections: And we desire to reverence and adore thee, as the supreme Lord and Governor of the Universe; who, by the Word of thy Power, and by the efficacious Influences of thy Providence, directs and over-rules all Things, for the general Good: We therefore desire, most devoutly, to refer ourselves and our Affairs to thy unerring Conduct, and in every Thing, by Prayer and Supplication, with Thanksgiving, to make known our Wants unto thee; and may the Words of our Mouths, and the Meditations of our Hearts, be now, and evermore, acceptable in thy Sight, O Lord, our Strength and our Redeemer!—We would call upon our Souls, and all that is within us, to magnify thy Name, that we are fearfully and wonderfully made, not only in the curious Frame and Structure of our Bodies; but in the far more noble and exalted Faculties of our Minds: Whereby we are rendered capable of the sublime Pleasures of Virtue and true Religion; capable, in some measure, of knowing, loving, serving, and for ever enjoying thee, the immutable Fountain of Life, Light, Perfection, and Happiness!—We adore thee, as our constant Preserver and Benefactor; for our Plenty, Peace, Liberty, Influence, and

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and for all the Necessaries of the present frail and imperfect State !—Thou hast crowned us with Loving Kindness, and with tender Mercy—And we desire, with the utmost Sincerity and Ardour of Soul, to ascribe Glory to God, in the highest, that, of thine infinite Compassion, on the Ignorance and Degeneracy of the human Race, thou wast pleased to send thy Son to be the Saviour of Mankind !—That he offered up himself a Sacrifice for the Sins of the whole World, and that thou hast confirmed unto us the essential Propitiousness of thy Nature, in the Acceptance of his Oblation, whereof thou hast given Assurance, by raising him from the Dead, and exalting him at thy right Hand !—O God, our Hope and Confidence is founded on thy infinite unchangeable Goodness, whereby thou art ever disposed to make the most favourable Allowances for the Imperfections that attend us ; whereby thou art ready to accept our Repentance, and to afford us all those Assistances which are necessary for advancing the Perfection of our Natures, for confirming good Resolutions, and bringing them to Maturity !—Give us, O Lord, a sincere unfeigned Repentance for all our Sins, which are absolutely inconsistent with the Rectitude of thy Nature, with the Dictates and Approbation of our own Consciences, and destructive of that Hope in thy Favour, which is the true Source of Peace, Joy, and Happiness, to all thy rational and accountable Creatures.—May we cultivate in our Minds a constant Reverence and Love of thy Majesty, as the most excellent and amiable of all Beings, as may excite us to yield a universal Obedience to thy Commands, which we have the highest Reason to acknowledge are equitable, gracious and beneficent, adapted to our State and Circumstances, and are intended to advance that moral Rectitude and Order, which are the chief Excellency of human Nature, and the Source of its Happiness !—May we delight in the Exercises of Religion and Virtue, which tend to raise our Desires of Happiness, far beyond present Things, and lead us to aspire after the Enjoyment and Delights
above !

above!—Amidst the Changes and Vicissitudes of the present World, may we maintain a constant Equanimity and Steadiness of Temper, an unruffled Patience and Resignation to thy Will, as believing all the Administrations of thy Providence are conducted with unerring Wisdom, and by invariable Rules of Righteousness and Goodness!—May we be Patterns of Integrity, of Peace, of Love, of such bright and exalted Virtue and undissembled Piety, as may adorn the Doctrine of God our Saviour!—Give us the Ornament of a meek and quiet Spirit, of constant, disinterested, diffusive Benevolence!—May we be sober, chaste and temperate, ruling all our Appetites by Moderation, and our Passions with Discretion!—Deliver us, at all Times, from the debasing, corrupting Prevalency of evil Customs, and may we never remove our Integrity from us; but in every Circumstance of trial, may we discover that our Virtue is superior to them; may we continue to cultivate in our Minds all those virtuous and good Dispositions, which are themselves the Glory of human Nature, and the Delight of the Deity!—Give us all Joy, through Believing, and let the Consciousness of our inflexible Integrity in Virtue give us such sublime Pleasure, as may be an Earnest of our future Inheritance!—Support us under the Vicissitudes of Life, against the Fear of Death: Prepare us for our great and solemn Change, that, at that awful Day, when a Time of Recompence approaches, and all Nature shall be dissolved, we may be able to lift up our Heads with Joy, rejoicing in Hope of thy Glory!—O thou Father of the whole Creation, who desireth the Happiness of all thy Creatures, send forth thy Light and thy Truth, that Mankind in general may come to the Knowledge of thy Will, and be universally saved!—Put an End to Idolatry and Superstition, to all Violence, Tyranny and Oppression, and to Persecution for Conscience Sake; and may Peace and Truth, Benevolence and Charity, Liberty, Virtue and Happiness universally prevail!—Bless our

Sovereign, King *George*, preserve his valuable Life, and endue him with every amiable Virtue, that may tend to the Promotion of Religion, the Honour, Interest and Happiness of these Kingdoms! Bless the Royal Family, may they be as eminent for Virtue as they are dignified by Birth and Rank in the World; and may all our Nobility and Gentry become Examples of Piety, Examples of Benevolence, and Promoters of moral Goodness! — May every Kind of Immorality and Vice be discouraged and suppressed amongst us; and may all the Inhabitants of this Land have their Hearts united in the Fear of thy great and awful Name, in a joint Pursuit of the common Interest and Good of Mankind; and may Christians of every Denomination be united in the Bonds of Friendship, of brotherly Love and christian Charity, and be edified in Faith and Holiness unto eternal Life! — O thou God of all Compassion, be the Father of the Fatherless, and the Widow's Judge; bind up the broken in Heart, comfort those that mourn, support the Aged, succour the Tempted, satisfy the Doubting, and supply the Poor with Bread! — Assist us in our further waiting upon thee, and thy unworthy Servant in Speaking; — may those that hear, not be forgetful Hearers, but Doers of thy Word, that so they may be blessed, indeed! And now, Lord, what wait we for? Thy Acceptance of our Prayers and Praises, ~~we~~ we implore for the Sake of thy own essential, immutable Goodness, in the Name, and as the Disciples of *Christ Jesus*, our Lord, who has taught us to say, Our Father, &c.

A GENERAL PRAYER.

O Thou eternal Origin of all Being; thou Source and Fountain of all Good, we thy frail, dependent Creatures desire humbly to approach thee, to pay our Tribute of Homage and Worship, on Account of thy supreme Perfection and Providence. All thy Works

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the amazing Beauty, Variety, and Usefulness
 Works praise thee, O God, as they afford such striking
 Proofs of a wise, benevolent, almighty Cause, — ~~their~~
amazing Beauty, Variety, and Usefulness. Their innumerable
 Instances we have received of thy paternal
 Love; shew thee to be the proper Object of our most de-
 lightful Contemplations; and should we be unmindful
 of that God that formed us, and neglect to pay thee
 those Returns of Homage and grateful Obedience,
 which is so justly thy Due, universal Nature must up-
 braid us with our Weakness and Ingratitude. We
 profess at this Time to be fully convinced of the Good-
 ness and Equity of all thy Requirements, and to
 esteem it the highest Honour of our rational Natures,
 to be employed in the Services of Piety and Virtue;
 and as thou hast made us capable, in some Measure, of
 resembling thy moral Perfections, and thereby of recom-
 mending ourselves to thy Favour, we would make it
 the ardent Request of our Souls, that we may be as-
 sisted and animated to the Performance of our Duty,
 suitably to the Importance of it.

We are conscious, O Lord, that notwithstanding
 the Light of Reason and Conscience is implanted in
 us, and we have been furnished with the highest
 Motives to Obedience, that we have often trans-
 gressed thy sacred Laws, and exposed ourselves to
 thy Displeasure. — O gracious God, more deeply af-
 fect our Hearts; lead our Minds seriously to consider
 what we are, and what we must be hereafter, that we
 may act as moral and as accountable Creatures! —
 May we be ever mindful of thy Omniscience and in-
 flexible Regard to Virtue and Integrity, that we may
 be watchful and careful to escape the Pollutions that
 are in the World through Lust, and have Respect
 unto all thy Commands. — May we cultivate that
 holy, humble Frame of Soul, and those Dispositions
 of universal Righteousness and Charity, that will ren-
 der us approved of God! In all the Concerns and
 Changes of this transitory Life, we beg thy Care and
 Goodness for the Supply of all our Wants, and may

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we constantly exercise a steady Faith, and dutiful Submission to thy Will, as the Children of God, and the Disciples of *Jesus Christ*. May we make his Example the Rule of our Behaviour, and his Promises the Support and Comfort of our Lives. May every Opportunity we enjoy for the solemn Worship of thee our God, and for impressing the great and interesting Truths and Motives of Religion, be attended with Seriousness, and improved with Candour.

While we are favoured with such abundant Discoveries of thy Will, and enjoy the Means of Salvation in so great Freedom ; we cannot but have a sincere and lively Concern for the ignorant and deluded Part of Mankind, whose Understandings are confused in their Enquiries after God, their Maker, and whose Consciences are often misled.—We pray, O God, for the extensive Spread of the Gospel ; and wherever the Grace of God has so far appeared bringing Salvation, may it produce its genuine Effects in the Hearts and Lives of Mankind ; teaching, and effectually prevailing on Men to deny all Ungodliness and worldly Lust, and to live soberly, righteously and godly, in Expectation of a certain and awful Eternity. — Bless the Ministers of the everlasting Gospel, of whatever Name or Party, may they diligently study their Master's Will, and honestly deliver it to others ; and we pray, that thou wilt succeed their Labours for the Conviction of Sinners, and for producing their entire Reformation, and for establishing Truth and Righteousness, Peace and Happiness on the Earth !

O thou who doest whatsoever pleaseth thee, both in the Armies of Heaven, and amongst the Inhabitants of the Earth : Be thou the watchful Guardian of *Great Britain*, our Strength, our Security, and our Glory !—May a steady, inflexible Regard to the public Happiness, be the governing Principle in our Rulers ; and may the Practice of pure, undefiled Religion, before God, be the lasting Security and Ornament of this Island !—Bless his Majesty King *GEORGE*, establish
-his

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his Throne in Righteousness ; and under his mild and equitable Administration, may we enjoy Abundance of Tranquility ! — Bless the Princess Dowager of *Wales*, and all the Branches of that illustrious House ; let them be distinguished by thy Favour, and by their Virtue and Usefulness. Mercifully regard the present Situation of our Affairs ; may the War, in which we are engaged, be conducted by prudent, upright, and active Men ; and grant them such Success as may effectually restore Peace, and establish a greater Regard to Faith, Harmony, and Equity, in the Nations round about us. — Bless our principal Ally ; we intreat thou wilt yet farther signalize him by thy Protection and a final Victory, that thereby a new Song of Praise may be put into our Mouths, even Praises to our God !

Assist us in our farther Attendance on thy Worship, dispose us to Seriousness and Attention ; that the Word spoken may contribute to our Improvement, Comfort, and Happiness. We ask these Things in the Name, and as the Disciples of thy Son, *Christ Jesus*, unto whom, as to the great Author and Finisher of our Faith, and our Prince and Saviour ; we render Honour and Thanksgiving, and through him ascribe unto thee, the supreme God, Glory and Dominion everlasting. *Amen.*

A GENERAL PRAYER.

ALMIGHTY and most glorious God, who coverest thyself with Light, as with a Garment, and art the original and immutable Source of Life, Perfection, and Happiness ! Though thou art far above our most exalted Conceptions, and incapable of receiving any Accession to thy Felicity, by the Service of Men or Angels ! Yet, adored be thy Grace, thou hast revealed thyself to us, as a Being accessible, and hast encouraged us, by Prayer, to maintain a sacred Intercourse with Heaven : And we desire, at this

Time, in a serious and devout Frame of Mind, to unite in this our Duty and Privilege. We acknowledge thee the first Cause of all Things. The invisible Things that are made—The surrounding Heavens which we view, every Object of Nature we behold, abundantly declare thy eternal Power and Godhead: And thy supporting, beneficent Providence displays, with peculiar Evidence, the Excellency of thy Nature, and loudly demands our Homage.—We acknowledge thee the greatest and best of all Beings, as possessed of every natural and of every moral Perfection; of matchless unrivalled Dignity. In the Contemplation of the supreme Excellency and Benignity of thy Nature, we desire to refer ourselves to thy Care, and to acquiesce in all the Dispensations of thy Providence: And we desire to rejoice in thee, and to magnify the Riches of thy Grace, that thy Beneficence has not been confined to this mortal State; but that thou hast made us Candidates for Life and Immortality, and endued us with such Powers and Capacities, as qualify us to be the Heirs of future Happiness.—We would call on all the Powers and Faculties of our Minds, to praise thy Name; that when the Children of Men had neglected the Knowledge and Fear of thee, their sovereign Lord, and had forfeited their original Dignity and Happiness, in the Fulness of Time, thou didst appoint the most proper and efficacious Means for their Restoration and Recovery, by constituting the Son of Righteousness to arise, with Healing in his Wings, to expel the Darkness that had overspread the World, to restore Light, Truth, Peace and Happiness, to the whole Race of Mankind.—We rejoice in the great Evidences of his divine Mission; in the important Truths and Doctrines of his Gospel; in the sacred Lessons it contains for our Instruction; in the gracious Promises made for our Encouragement and Consolation; and for the illustrious Display of thy glorious Perfections, through the Mediator of the new Covenant, through whom we have Access unto thee. We would

would approach unto thee, in that Way thou hast consecrated, and beg that we may be found in those humble, religious Dispositions of Mind, which are required of us to our Acceptance.—May each of us hate Sin, with a perfect Hatred, as repugnant to all the Ties of Duty; and may we form the most sincere persevering Resolutions in thy Service: And, that these Resolutions may be confirmed, we approach unto thee for Grace, and for Help in every Time of Need. May each of us seriously reflect on the great and important Purposes for which we were created, and be duly sensible, that to obtain an Interest in thy Favour is our ultimate Good; and whilst we profess to prefer this to all other Pleasures or Pursuits, may we maintain a steady Obedience to thy Will, and a dutiful Submission to the Dispensations of thy Providence!—May we set the Lord *Jesus Christ* before us, as our great Exemplar; the Author and Finisher of our Faith; and may we testify the Excellency of our holy Religion, by its forming us to a truly, useful, amiable Character, fitting us, in some measure, for that immortal State of Felicity we profess to have in View!—May it be our Happiness to find, from the most strict Examination, that in Simplicity, and godly Sincerity, by the Grace of God, we have had our Conversation in the World!—From thence may we be able to conclude, thou art our Father and our Friend, and may this Hope support us under all the afflictive Changes of this World, and in the near Approaches to our Dissolution! In the solacing, transporting Views, that we shall shortly be united to an innumerable Company of Angels; to the Spirits of just Men made perfect, unto *Jesus*, the Mediator of the new Covenant, and to God the Judge of all.

O thou Father of Goodness, we desire most humbly to supplicate thy Majesty, that the glorious Privileges of the Gospel may be extended throughout the remotest Parts of the habitable Earth!—May all the different Nations and Languages upon Earth be united

worshipping thee, the one God and Father of all, in Spirit and in Truth.

Regard the Kingdoms of *Great Britain and Ireland!* O Lord, we would be sensible of thy Goodness; we would commit ourselves and all our Concerns to thy Providence, intreating thou wilt continue our Success in the present War, and in due Time restore to us an honourable, safe and lasting Peace!

Bless our Sovereign King *GEORGE*, may he be as a Wall of Salvation round about us, and a Glory in the midst of us!

Regard every Branch of that illustrious House! All that act in the important Affairs of the Nation! May our great Men be good Men, our Ministers Peace, and our Exactors Righteousness! — May the Ministers of the Gospel be able, faithful Stewards of the Truths of God! May they come forth in the Fullness of the Blessing of the Gospel of *Christ*, and be successful Instruments for the important Purposes of the Christian Ministry. Bless all Societies of Christians however distinguished; may they experience thou art with them of a Truth! — Be with us in our present Attendance, that by our so doing, our spiritual Strength may be promoted; and by participating of the Consolations of thy Spirit, we may go on our Way rejoicing! We recommend to thy fatherly Compassion all that labour under Affliction, that suffer under Persecution, Oppression and Trouble, and especially all that are united to us by the peculiar Ties of Nature! — Reward our Benefactors, and forgive our Enemies! — All we ask is in the Name of our Lord *Jesus Christ*, our ever-living Advocate, for whom we would always praise thee! — Now unto him that is able to keep us from falling, and to present us faultless before the Presence of his Glory, with exceeding Joy, to the only wise God and our Saviour, be Glory and Majesty, Dominion and Power, both now and for ever.

Amen.

A G E-

A GENERAL PRAYER.

O Thou supreme, adorable Creator, the original and independent Being, self-sufficient to thine own immutable Perfection and Happiness ! Because thou only art Self-existent : Thy Power infinite, thy Wisdom unsearchable, thy Goodness essential and immutable ! The Universe is the Creature of God, and all Beings must derive their Existence and Happiness from thee. All thy Works carry in them the lively Marks of great Design in their Uniformity, Variety, Beauty and Usefulness. The Heavens declare the Glory of God, the Firmament sheweth thy handy Work ! Day after Day poureth forth this Speech, and Night unto Night teacheth this Knowledge. Yea, every Moment gives us fresh Instances of the Largesses of thy Bounty ; supporting, establishing and maintaining the original Order of Nature. Thy Presence cheers the Universe ; for without the animating Influences of thy Providence, all Nature must mourn, languish and die ; and how essential is thy Favour to all intelligent Beings ! Thy Favour to them must be Life ; thy Loving-kindness better than Life. We thy Creatures, endued with Powers of Intelligence, of Reflection and Liberty in our Determinations, desire most devoutly to seek thy Face, to implore thy Favour, with a Sollicitude the most sincere, with an Earnestness that is supreme. As we acknowledge thee our sovereign Lord, we profess we are sensible our Obligations to Duty and Gratitude are infinite. But, O Lord, while we acknowledge before thee thy unalienable Right to us, and to the most devout Affections of our Souls, we cannot but recollect (and desire to do it with true Penitence of Soul) our frequent Remissness in Duty. We have not attended with suitable Reverence and Affection to the Source of our Life and Happiness : We have suffered Vanity and Folly

Folly to interrupt our Duty, to engross our Time, our Abilities, our Affections, our Pursuits.

O righteous Father, we are justly afraid of thy Judgments ; but thou art merciful, as well as just : Thy Perfections are the Ground of our Hope, and render thee the alone proper Object of our Prayers. O most gracious God, pardon our Iniquity, and justify us freely by thy Grace, thro' that Redemption which is in *Christ Jesus* !—We acknowledge all thy Commands are righteous, just and good ; we desire, therefore, to consecrate all the Powers of our Souls sacred to Religion and Virtue : Let none of the trifling Temptations of the World delude us, at any Time, into the Paths of Vice ! May we discern, that whatsoever is in the World, the Lust of the Flesh, the Lust of the Eyes, and the Pride of Life, is not of God ; but inconsistent with our highest Interest, and destructive of our most rational and substantial Happiness. As we are called to Holiness and Virtue, as we are instructed by the Gospel, and taught by the Example of *Jesus Christ*, may we be forming our Lives by the pure and sacred Precepts of Religion ! Cultivating in our Breasts the Love of God ; the Love of the Creation of God. O thou Father of all Goodness, graciously assist us to persevere in all our good Purposes and Resolutions, to resist the Temptations of a sensual, deluding World, that would corrupt and taint our Virtues. Under all the Conditions and Circumstances of Life, may we act consistent with the Dignity of our Nature, and worthy the Privileges of our holy Profession, under the Consciousness and governing Influence of thy supreme Inspection, that our Consciences may never reproach us, and that God himself may hereafter accept and reward us !

O thou universal Sovereign, we would not only be solicitous for our own Rectitude and Happiness ; but we would wish well to all the human Race ; and we pray thou wilt dissipate every Delusion and Superstition that tends to corrupt the Hearts and Manners of Men ! Let Idolatry and Error no longer any where prevail against

gainst the Truth, and true Religion; and let the tyrannical Measures of Persecutors be cut to Pieces. For thy Name Sake, O Lord, arise, make bare thine Arm, and deliver the Oppressed, that all the World may know, that the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth on the Earth!

The Lord in Mercy regard this Nation; suffer us not to be a Prey to our Enemies; but continue to us our Plenty, our Liberties, and whatever is dear to us.

Bless our lawful, our rightful Sovereign! Give the King thy Judgments, O Lord; may he always discern and distinguish between Persons and Things that differ, and may he adopt whatever is right and good! May all his Counsellors be Men of Wisdom, Penetration, Integrity, and of public Spirit! May his Ministers be the Friends of religious and civil Liberty, and Lovers of their Country! That he may have the Satisfaction of putting his Kingdoms in the full Enjoyment of Peace, Liberty and Happiness!

We pray that the preaching of the Gospel may, in Truth, reform the Judgment, and rectify the Hearts of Mankind!

Regard every Case we should mention before thee; the Aged and the Feeble, be their Strength and Support; be the Widow's Guide and Judge; succour the Tempted; resolve the Doubting; satisfy the Poor with Bread; visit Families where they have Sick. If it be the Will of God, spare the Life of him for whom our Prayers are desired. If thy Wisdom shall not see fit to remove, Lord sanctify the Affliction!—Give a Blessing on the Word that shall be spoken at this Time. As we go from one Act of Duty to another, may we experience our Advances in Piety and Virtue, and, by every Means of Grace, be better fitted for the Employment and Felicity of the future World! Accept us in all we do, through *Jesus Christ* the righteous, in whose Words we sum up all our Requests to thee, Our Father, &c.

A G E-

A GENERAL PRAYER.

O Thou omnipotent Creator ! We acknowledge that thou art possessed of original supreme Excellence and Majesty ; that thine almighty Power, infinite Wisdom and Goodness, gave Existence to the Universe ; and that thy providential Care and Goodness (universal as the all-circling Sun) render thee the only Object of the Adoration of all intelligent Beings.

We rejoice in the many incontestable Evidences of thy divine Perfections, and in the many peculiar Instances of the Clemency of thy Nature. We triumph in thy supreme, impartial Goodness ; that the moral Government of thy intelligent Creatures, as well as of universal Nature, are under the Controul and Direction of thy matchless Perfections. We thank God, that we have been placed in so noble and elegant a Rank of thy Works, so far superior to the lower Creation, and so nearly ally'd to the angelic Beings.

While we contemplate, with Pleasure, on the Happiness of those exalted Spirits, who surround thy Throne ; who behold thy Face continually ; whose Dignity and Happiness it is to worship before thee, and to execute thy sovereign Commands, may we taste and relish those divine and exalted Pleasures of celebrating thy matchless Perfections, and delightfully exercise our Abilities, in the Praise of him that made us, and is our constant Preserver and Blessing !

We rejoice, that thou art made known to us, immutable in thy Nature, unchangable and unlimited in thy Goodness, not confined to this Globe, nor to this finite State of Existence, but extensive as the Wants of all thy Creation, and lasting as our immortal Souls.

When we reflect on thy distinguishing Goodness to thy sinful, offending Offspring, how shall we express those Sentiments of Gratitude which arise within us, that in the Depths of consummate Wisdom and Beneficence, a Scheme was contrived, the most astonishing and efficacious, to restore us to the Image and Favour
of

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of God. Glory be to God, in the highest, for this Good-will towards Men, and we adore the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, for what he did and suffered for us: Hosanna! Blessed is he that cometh in the Name of the Lord. O thou Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of Mercies, and the Friend of Mankind, in the Multitude of thy Compassions, pardon the Frailties of our fallen Nature. 'Tis in that Goodness of thine, display'd in and through Christ, is all our Hope, and all our Salvation. May we, by this Grace, and by the powerful Influence of his most holy Gospel, be disposed to the most sincere and ardent Love of thy Majesty; and may we cultivate in our Minds the highest and noblest Ambition of resembling thee, who art supremely good, by the most extensive Friendship and good Offices to our Fellow Creatures! O that we may excel in that Humanity of Temper and Disposition, which so greatly constitutes a virtuous Character! May that most pure and holy Religion we profess, produce in us all its genuine Effects; may it disengage us from this World, and raise our Desires and our Affections to God. And by rendering us public Examples and Encouragers of Piety, may we attain such a joyful Hope and Assurance of thy Favour, as may in some Measure anticipate those Pleasures and Joys which flow at thy right Hand.

O thou benevolent Father, and Ruler of the World! When we thus approach the Throne of thy everlasting Mercy, we desire to recommend, not only ourselves, but all our Brethren in Christ Jesus, and all our Brethren of Mankind, for whom, and for whose Happiness, we cannot but feel a sympathetic Concern! —Let the Knowledge of thy Will, as contained in the Gospel of thy Son, be extended to the remotest Parts of the Earth, and wherever that venerable Name is professed, there may it be esteemed; its sacred Influences be felt in the Heart, and manifested in the Lives of its Votaries; and may Protestantism more generally prevail! Lord prosper our Ally in the Defence
of

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of it, as thou hast made him eminent in thy Providence, farther signalize him in the Wisdom and Magnanimity of his Mind, and by crowning him with Safety and Success! We thank thee, that thou hast raised up a Prince to inherit the Throne of his Father, so promising and hopeful, who hath placed so much Trust and Confidence under God in the Affection of his faithful Subjects, and whom we would this Day most humbly recommend to the Care of thy Providence; praying, that his Abilities, and successful Efforts in the Cause of Religion and Liberty, may contribute to the Restoration of Peace, and farther endear him to a grateful, a virtuous, and happy People. Surround his Throne with able Ministers, Men of Knowledge and Integrity. Inspire the great Senate of the Nation with Unity and public Spirit, and give a greater Weight and Influence to their Measures; let them be ever encouraged to pursue the Honour and Interest of *Great Britain*, and the Preservation of our excellent Constitution.—We humbly intreat thou wilt give Success to our Arms, but in the mean Time, we would not lean on an Arm of Flesh, nor rely on the Councils of fallible Men; but may we depend ultimately upon that great, that supreme Being, who inspires the Understanding, and strengthens the Hearts of Men; and makes all such Revolutions in Governments, as thy infinite Wisdom shall direct. To whom therefore, with the utmost Confidence, we refer ourselves, and our Concerns of a temporal and spiritual Nature, and to whom with the most profound Homage, we desire to ascribe the Kingdom, Power and Glory, Dominion and Praise, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

A GENERAL PRAYER.

O Thou infinitely great and glorious God, we acknowledge and adore thee as the almighty Creator, the universal Preserver, and supreme Governor of the World; whose Power is constantly exercised and directed by infinite Goodness, so that tho' thou

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art supreme above all, and hast an absolute Sovereignty over thy Creatures ; yet thy Perfections prescribe the Measures of thy Government, and direct the various Events of thy Providence, so as may most conduce to the Welfare and Happiness of thy Creation. We desire therefore to acknowledge thee in all thy Dispensations, and tho' we cannot penetrate into the Designs and Effects of many of them, yet we know enough to convince us, that supreme Wisdom and Goodness runs through all thy Works ; and that thou art continually scattering around us the Riches of thy Bounty, and amply supplying the Wants of thy numerous Family.—O that Men would praise the Lord for his Goodness, and for his wonderful Works unto the Children of Men ! It is Matter of Joy and Thankfulness to us, that thou hast distinguished us in the Rank of thy Creation, enduing us with Perfections of Nature, capable of knowing thee, the Lord our Maker ; of imitating thy moral Perfections, and hast intended us for the Enjoyment of thyself. We would be thankful for every particular Instance of thy propitious Providence, that thou hast supplied our Wants ; protected us from impending Danger ; assisted us under various Weaknesses and Infirmities of Body and Mind ; and, by thy Grace, prevented us from running into many Excesses, which others have fallen into.—Yet, O Lord, we cannot presume to justify ourselves ; for when we consider, how far short we have come of acting suitably to our Abilities and Obligations, we have Reason to say, God be merciful to us Sinners ; and our Hopes of thy Mercy and Favour must have been at best but faint and languid, were it not that thou art represented to us in the most amiable and engaging Light, as a Being readily disposed to compassionate our natural Weakness, and as a Sin-forgiving God. Adored be the Riches of divine Love, which laid a Foundation for our Hope and Confidence ; that a Saviour was provided to redeem us from Sin, and from Death, and to restore us to immortal Happiness—Blessing, Glory,

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Glory and Honour be ascribed unto God, and to the Lamb, for ever and ever !—With Wonder and with Joy would we contemplate the amazing Work, admire and celebrate this Grace in our imperfect Measure and Degree, till we arrive at those happy Regions, where we shall enjoy the Effects of redeeming Love, and sing thy Praise for ever —O, that while we thus recognize thy Mercy, and express Words of Thankfulness, our Souls may be warmed with a sincere and ardent Love ; an unfeigned Trust in thy supreme, forgiving Mercy ; and that we may live in the delightful Contemplation of thy Goodness, and be from thence powerfully engaged to secure an Interest in thy Favour. O thou, whose all-creating Word said, let there be Light, and there was Light ; shine into our Hearts, and give us the Knowledge of the Glory of thy Grace in the Face of *Jesus Christ* ; may Sin (the Ingratitude of sinning against God) be the Abhorrence of our Souls. Subdue the Power of it by thy Grace ; and as we profess ourselves Christians, may we be the willing and obedient Subjects of his Kingdom ; may we regard the Example and Precepts of our great Master ; may we follow him as our Leader, obey him as our Lord, and seek an Interest in him, who giveth eternal Life to all his genuine Disciples. As we say we abide in him, may we walk even as he walked.—O that we may imitate him in his supreme, ardent Love to thy Majesty, in a reverential and patient Submission to thy Providence, and in his benevolent and friendly Offices to Mankind. While we sojourn in this probationary State, may we consider our Connection with Eternity, and, in a Time of Health, prepare for Sicknens, and for Death ; that at our near Approaches to our last Moments, we may honour our Christian Profession, by the Steadfastness of our Faith, Hope, and Joy in God, through our Lord *Jesus Christ*.—Conduct us, O gracious God, through the changing Scenes of this Life ; guard us from the Snares of Prosperity, from the Temptations of Adversity ; suffer us not to place our

Hap-

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Happiness in any of the unsatisfying and fading Pleasures of this World; but may we have more exalted Views and Desires, and solace ourselves with the Prospect of those glorious and happy Regions, where Sorrow, and the Occasions of it, will be at an End. We ask all depending on thine inherent Goodness; and as the Disciples of *Christ Jesus* the Lord, who hath directed us when we pray to say, our Father, &c.

A GENERAL PRAYER.

ALMIGHTY and most merciful Father, the King eternal, immortal, invisible, and the only wise God; the first Cause of all Being, the Fountain of all Good, whose Providence is constantly extended to all the Works of thy Hand: We adore thee, as the universal unwearied Benefactor, and as the righteous Governor of all intelligent Creatures, whose glorious, awful, animating Presence, fills the boundless Expanse of Nature! Were we to ascend up into Heaven, there we should be astonished with the peculiar Splendor of thy Glory, amidst Cherubims and Seraphims: If we descend into Hell, there thy Majesty is arrayed in Terror: If we take the Wings of the Morning, and fly to the utmost Parts of the Earth, there also Nature subsists alone by thy Presence and Energy: If we should say, the Darkness shall cover us, and the Night shall hide us, the Darkness and the Light are both alike to thee, created by thy Power, dependent on thy Pleasure, and subservient to the Purposes of thy universal Providence. In this Belief, and under the awful Influence of thy Presence, we desire continually to live and act; and whilst we remember thy constant Presence and Inspection, may we confide in that essential Goodness of thy Nature, whereby thou art always disposed to pity our Infirmities, and make every gracious Allowance in our Favour, to accept our Repentance, and kindly aid our Endeavours in the Practice of Virtue. Animated by these Discoveries of thyself, we would most seriously reflect on our own Conduct, and wherein we have act-

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ed in any Instance unworthy the Christian Character, may our Repentance be sincere, and effectually rectify our Conduct; and may our past Sins be blotted out, through that Faith in *Jesus Christ*, which produces all the genuine Effects of his most holy Gospel. May we make it the constant ardent Resolution of our Souls, to act suitably to the Grace and Mercies we have enjoyed, the Profession we have made, and the Hope we entertain of Life and Immortality! Thus may we be guarded against the Allurements of Riches, Honours, or sensual Pleasures, that may tend to corrupt our Minds, taint our Innocence, or in the least remove our Integrity!—May we rise superior to all the Temptations and Difficulties, that attend us in the present, frail, imperfect State, in the Consciousness of thy Favour and well-grounded Hope of future Glory.—May such Hope be as an Anchor to our Souls, and divest our Minds of all Anxiety, and uneasy Sollicitude, about the Things of this World, even under severe Afflictions and Trials, and in the near Approaches to our Dissolution; when our Flesh and our Heart shall fail; may God be the Strength of our Heart and final Portion.—Oh gracious God, at that awful Period when the Heavens shall pass away with great Noise, and the Elements shall melt with fervent Heat, and the Earth with the Works that are therein shall be burnt up: own us thine, and call us Blessed.

Accept us, O thou Father and Friend of the Universe, (who desireth not the Death of any Sinner) when we pray for the whole Race of Mankind! Spread the Knowledge of our Lord *Jesus Christ* throughout the habitable World; put a final Period to Pagan Darknes and Idolatry, to Mahomedan Imposture and Imposition, to Papal Corruption and Superstition, to all Imposition on the Conscience, on the Rights and Liberties of Mankind, and to every Degree of Tyranny, Oppression and Persecution for Conscience-sake; and may such as profess themselves the Members of Protestant Churches follow the Truth, as it is in *Jesus*,
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and bring themselves to the Standard of the Holy Scriptures, in Faith, in Worship and in Conversation; especially, we pray that thou wilt bless the Ministers of the Gospel, of every Name and Denomination; may they be suitably qualified, and sincerely disposed to inform the Ignorant, to soften the Prejudiced, and to solve the Doubts of the scrupulous, to reform the Vicious, to comfort, establish and encourage the Virtuous, and to be the Saviour of Life unto Life, to all that hear them! Bless thy Servants, who statedly minister in this Place; add many Seals to their Ministry, that there may be Glory and Crown of rejoicing at the last Day! Graciously regard *Great Britain!* Thou hast hitherto been the Guardian and Protector of these Isles. Thou hast encouraged us to hope in thy Goodness. Interpose, O Lord, by thy Providence at this Time, to deliver us from the evil Designs of our inveterate Enemies; Bless his Majesty, King *George*, endue him with Wisdom and Fortitude, may he be the happy Instrument of restoring and establishing Peace and Tranquility in this Nation; and add to him Length of Days, Riches and Honour.

Bless the Princess Dowager of *Wales*, and all the Branches of the Royal Family; may they have every Qualification that may render them truly honourable and happy in Life, and abundantly glorious in the future World.—Bless the King's Council, and the Nation's Council; may our great Men be an Honour to this Nation, by their Wisdom, Integrity and Virtue! So over-rule the Determinations and Measures of our Legislature, that Peace and Tranquility may soon return to our Land.—O Lord, extend thy merciful Regard to the Afflicted of every Kind, either in Body, Mind or Estate; ease the Pained, strengthen the Weak, support the Languishing, recover the Sick, and compose the disordered in Mind! Be nigh to all that are drawing near to their last Moments; graciously forgive their Sins, and confirm their Hopes in thy Mercy, give them such Assurance of thy Favour as is better than Life! Check such as are running on in a Course

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of Impiety, and reduce them to Consideration and Reformation: Be gracious to any of thy Handmaids approaching the Hour of Nature's Difficulty, who have desired to share in our Prayers! Oh, thou Father and Fountain of all Beneficence, support and bless them: Command thy Blessing on what has been spoken at this Time, so far as it is consistent with Reason and Revelation; give thy People an hearing Ear, an understanding and obedient Heart, that it may produce the true and genuine Fruits of Piety and Goodness. We ask it for the Sake of thine own eternal Goodness, and as the Disciples of thy Son *Jesus Christ*, in whose Words we sum up all our Requests to thee our Father, &c.

The following PRAYERS are disposed and adjusted in each Part according to the PLAN recommended in my Preface.

A PRAYER at the Beginning of Public Worship.

O Thou infinitely exalted Jehovah, who art continually surrounded with an innumerable Company of glorious Angels, who behold thy Face in Righteousness, who celebrate thy Praises, and execute thy Pleasure with Rapture; and who, amidst all their Elevation, can wish no higher Felicity than to be thus employed for ever! Our Souls would fain aspire to join our humble Notes with those happy Seraphs, and we rejoice in this, that a Day will come when our most exalted Wishes will be consummated, in the Felicity of worshipping him that sitteth on the Throne, and the Lamb, after their elevated and transporting Manner.—In the mean while we esteem it the Glory and Happiness of human Nature, to exercise our noblest Faculties in so rational, so honourable and so divine an Employ: Let our Hearts be devoutly engaged, at
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this Time in the Admiration, and in the Adoration of thy glorious Perfections ; and we would present our Addresses at the Footstool of the Throne of the immortal God, in the Name, in the propitious Name of *Jesus Christ*.—Vouchsafe to behold thy poor Creatures from the Heights of that Seat where Mercy dwells for ever ! — Accept our most humble and hearty Thanks for all the Displays thou hast been pleased to make of thy Perfection and Attributes ; of the Councils of thy Will, especially of that marvellous Scheme of divine and everlasting Salvation, devised and executed by thy unerring Wisdom under the Administration of *Christ Jesus*, finally to be consummated in the celestial and immortal Felicity of Mankind. O that whilst we meditate on that Theme of Wonder (on which Angels and Archangels delight to dwell) all the Sentiments of ingenuous Gratitude which our Nature is capable of, may be kindled into one joyful Strain of sincere, ardent Devotion ! Let this, the Wonder of Angels, God manifested in the Flesh, be the Astonishment and the Joy of our Souls ! — May we be warmed with divine Love and Grace, and feel its holy Energy. transforming us into the very Image of the Son of God.—Enlighten our Understanding, we beseech thee, in the most important Truths ; replenish our Memories with the best Things ; inspire our Hearts with the kindest and worthiest Affections : May we be cloathed with all the Graces of the divine Life, fixed and shining as the Stars in the Firmament ; and being Partakers of divine immaculate Righteousness, may we be cloathed with the Garment of Immortality, ever fresh and ever fair ! — Enlightened and enlivened by the Rays of heavenly Faith, may we wing our Way through the Wilderness of this World uninterrupted in our Christian Course, by the trifling Amusements of this fleeting State of Things ! Save us, we intreat thee, from resting in a barren Faith, in an inefficacious Profession, or in unsanctifying Ceremonies ; but may we feel the Power and Efficacy of

divine Truth, in all its purifying and pleasurable Effects! — Blessed for ever be the great Dispenser of Blessings; for that Goodness and Mercy which hath followed any of us in the Course of our Lives; for having inclined the Hearts of any of us, to aspire after the Life, the Employment of Angels; that we have a Taste for divine Things! — We thank God for all the pious Impressions that have been made on our Minds, by whatever Means or Instruments. This is the Day the Lord hath made, and we hope many of us can say, from the Sensations of our Souls, we rejoice and are glad to pay our Tribute of Praise in thy Sanctuary, to sing *Hosannab* to the Son of *David*. Blessed is the Saviour that cometh in the Name of the Lord, and they who hear the sacred Dictates of his Word! Oh may we be animated by the divine Spirit to all those pious and devout Affections that are becoming Christian Worshippers, and by this, and every Attendance, on such Solemnities, may we be more closely united to *Christ Jesus* our Lord, and rejoice in the triumphant Views of hereafter joining the cœlestial Choir, in ascribing Blessing and Honour, and Glory, and Power, unto him that sitteth on the Throne, and to the Lamb, for ever and ever! *Amen.*

A PRAYER to be used at the Beginning of public Worship.

O Thou eternal Majesty of Heaven and Earth, before whom Millions of Angels continually prostrate, acknowledging and celebrating the Glories of thy Name. — We thine intelligent Offspring, who have been so greatly distinguished by thy Favours, desire to come into thy House with Thanksgiving, and to enter thy Courts with Praise. We would at this Time call upon all the Powers and Faculties of our Souls to praise and magnify thy holy Name. — We would approach the Throne of thy Holiness and Glory, not to inform thy Omniscience, for thou knowest the inmost

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Recesses of our Souls; our Thoughts cannot be concealed from thee: We come not before thee asking Protection from the omnipotent Power, because thou art inexorable and backward to do us Good. We know that thy Power is always exercised for answering the most benevolent Designs, and for promoting the Happiness of the moral World; but we come before thee and engage in the sacred Offices of Devotion, that we may improve the pious and devout Affections of our Minds, have a filial Fear and Reverence, a sincere and ardent Love of thy Majesty, and that by admiring and adoring the perfect Excellency of thy Nature, thy spotless Purity and Righteousness, our Souls may be formed to a Similitude of the divine Mind.—We come before thee at this Time acknowledging thee alone to be God, that our Faith, our Hope and Trust in thee may be more confirmed.—We acknowledge the Acts of thy Mercy, which we are convinced extend to all the Works of thy Hands that our Souls may be filled with such angelic Homage and Esteem, as may suitably influence our future Conduct. — And we desire to confess our Sins with such meek, humble and contrite Dispositions of Soul, as may obtain Forgiveness of them, and be a Means of fixing our Resolutions to Piety and Virtue.—We desire, O God, that when we engage in the solemn Acts of Devotion it may be with such Dispositions, as may recommend them to thy Regard.—But who of us, O Lord, is sufficient to these Things? We therefore humbly implore thy Blessing: Bow the Heavens and come down, make one in the midst of us; breathe upon our cold Affections; raise them to a divine Ardour. — Oh still whatever is tumultuous in our Breast; reform whatever is amiss; establish and confirm what is right, and lead us in the Way everlasting; that by this, and every such solemn Approach to the Throne of thy heavenly Grace, we may be better fitted, by the Refinement and Spirituality of our Affections, to be received into those happy Mansions, where we shall

join the Assemblies of Angels and glorified Spirits, in celebrating the Honours of thy Name, in a far more perfect Manner than our present imperfect State will admit. Lord, let this be thy heavenly Will, our Souls shall rejoice and give thee the Glory for ever and ever, *Amen.*

A PRAYER to be used at the Beginning of public Worship.

O Lord our God ! thou art worthy to receive Ascriptions of Glory and Honour and Power from all intelligent Beings, both in Heaven and on Earth ; for thou hast created all Things, and to answer the wise and benevolent Purposes of thy Will, they are and were created. Among those that are called Gods there is none like unto thee, neither are there any Works like unto thy Works : Thou art very great, thou dost wondrous Things, thou art God alone. We account it the distinguishing Honour and Happiness of our Nature that we can acquaint ourselves with thee, our Maker, that we are capable of contemplating thy matchless Excellencies, of magnifying and praising, and in some Measure of resembling thee, who art the great Original of all Perfection and Felicity. May none of us be chargeable with confining our Attention to the Concerns of the more animal Life, or debasing the noble Faculties with which thou hast graciously endowed us, by giving up ourselves to the Pursuits of Sin and Folly. Whatever Qualifications we may be destitute of, may we ever be possessed of that heavenly Wisdom, that consists in the supreme Love and Reverence of thy sacred Majesty, and in a governing Concern to be conformed to thine holy Nature and Will in all Things. With the utmost Readiness would we, on ever proper Occasion, abstract our Minds from Objects and Pursuits of an external Nature to hold Communion with thee, our God, in the divine Exercises of Prayer and Praise ; and to attend to those several Means of religious Improvement, which
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thou art putting into our Hands. With grateful Hearts would we now remember and acknowledge thy Goodness towards us, in that thou hast added another Week to our Lives, and art favouring us with a repeated Opportunity for public Worship. We would enter thy Courts with Thanksgiving, and with the warmest Affection of Soul ; bless thy Name for this, and for all the various Instances of thy Goodness, which we have received. May we not be so ungrateful and foolish, as to trifle away these valuable Opportunities for promoting the Welfare and Happiness of our Souls, which thou in thy great Mercy dost afford us. Let us not content ourselves with a mere empty Show and specious Pretence of serving thee. May we remember that thou seest in secret ; penetratest the inmost Recesses of our Hearts ; and that those who worship thee acceptably, must do it in Spirit and in Truth. May our Devotion be sincere, rational and fervent, During those Addresses which shall further be offered at thy throne of Grace, may our Minds be impressed with a lively Sense of thine infinite Greatness and Excellence, and actuated by all those devout Affections which are due unto thee. May our Hearts unite with our Lips in shewing forth thy Praises. May the Instructions, which shall be delivered from thy holy Word, meet with a suitable Reception. If any corrupt Prejudices have taken hold of our Minds ; O thou God of Truth and Righteousness, enable us to surmount them. May thy People attend to what shall be spoken with Candour, Ingenuity and Seriousness, concerned above all Things to improve in the Knowledge and Practice of pure and undefiled Religion, and so to hear that their Souls may live. May this, we earnestly wish and pray, be the prevailing Spirit in all thy worshipping Assemblies this Day. May all who profess to worship thee, be found sincere and upright, serving thee, our God, with a pure Heart, and in the general Tenor of their Lives, faithfully performing thy Will, that we may all finally be approved of thee, and
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be united to the glorious and happy Society of thy perfect Worshipers above; according to thy gracious Promise declared and ratified by thy Son, our Saviour, *Jesus Christ*, through whom be Glory to thee, O God, in the highest, now and for ever. *Amen.*

A PRAYER to be used at the Beginning of public Worship.

INfinitely great, transcendently glorious Lord God Almighty. Thou art, from Everlasting to Everlasting, the same Yesterday, To-day, and for ever, without the least Variation, or Shadow of Change, in thy Nature or Perfections. Angels and Arch-angels, constantly attendant in thy Presence, esteem it their highest Honour to celebrate thy matchless Perfections, in those Regions of Light and Joy: And altho', from the supreme Excellencies of thy Nature, thou art exalted above all Blessing and Praise, they, at the same Time, render thee the Object of our most devout Adoration. We therefore, thy intelligent Creatures, whom thou hast made capable of paying a rational Homage and Worship, desire to esteem it our Duty and Privilege, to join with all in Heaven and all on Earth, in praising and magnifying thy Name, O God; for great is the Lord, and greatly to be feared; good, and therefore worthy to be loved; and when we thus presume to approach the Throne of thy Glory, we desire to recommend our Devotion, by the Uprightness of our Hearts, and the Sincerity of our Intentions—O thou that inhabitest Eternity, yet condescendest to regard the Humble and Contrite, fulfil to us thy gracious Promise, that where two or three are gathered together in thy Name, thou wilt be in the midst of them; may we feel the Power, and enjoy the Pleasure of Religion, in this Season—and while we make Mention of the adorable Perfections of thy Nature, may it be the Means of forming our Minds to a Resemblance of thy moral Character.—While we attempt to enumerate thy Mercies, which are renewed to us as the Moments

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of our Lives, may it beget in us such Sentiments of Gratitude, as may discover itself in the most genuine and lively Effects.—Whilst we confess our Sins before thee, so often repeated, so highly aggravated, may it teach us such an unfeigned Humility, as may influence our future Conduct, and adorn our Christian Character.—Whilst we profess our Obligations to Duty rational and indispensable, may our Resolutions be strengthened and confirmed; and may we perform each Part of the Service before us with that Seriousness, Attention and Sincerity, which becomes us, (remembering we are in the Presence of God, to whom all Hearts are open, all Desires known) that so we may obtain thy gracious Acceptance—Lord, hear us, accept us, and answer us, for the Lord *Jesus Christ's* Sake, to whom, as the Lamb that was slain, but is risen, and through whom, to thy supreme, incomprehensible Majesty, be ascribed all Honour, Power and Glory, for ever. *Amen.*

A PRAYER preceding a SERMON.

O Lord our God, the great and glorious Majesty of Heaven and Earth, the self-existent, independent Jehovah, transcendently perfect and blessed, and happy in thine own Nature, and the Source of all Being and of all Happiness to the whole Creation! Of thee, and to thee, and through thee, are all Things! Thou art worthy of the Love and Gratitude, of the most sincere Homage and Adoration, and the most perfect Obedience, of all thy reasonable Creatures; for thou hast created all Things at thy Pleasure, and supportest them by thy never-failing Goodness! The Heavens most evidently proclaim to us thy Glory, the Firmament sheweth the stupendous Works of thy Hands! This Earth, which thou hast formed, the Air in which we breathe, the Sea and the Fulness thereof, proclaim thy unbounded Power, thy indefectible, unerring Wisdom, thy universal Goodness; and we are more immediately and indispensibly obliged to celebrate

brate thy Goodness, when we consider the Rank in which we are placed in thy Creation ; that thou hast not only given us curious organized Bodies, and breathed into us the Breath of Life, but hast given us rational, intelligent, immortal Spirits, capable of investigating the Works thou hast made, of surveying their Beauty, Order and Perfection, of admiring and adoring the Wisdom, the Power and Goodness thou hast displayed in them ! O Lord our God, by their beneficent Effects, we are led to thee, the first Cause, and esteem it our highest Dignity and Privilege, to employ the noble Powers and Capacities of our Souls, in the Service of thee, our God ; and as thou hast introduced us into a World, furnished with such Variety for our Support and Entertainment, we must be inexcusable, if we neglect to acknowledge God, or to give thee the Honour and the Glory, and the Praise, indispensibly due from all thy rational Creatures : And we would now come with Joy and Gladness of Soul, to magnify the God of our Beings ; adoring that Goodness that hath, in so many Instances, distinguished us by thy Favour. Surely, Goodness and Mercy hath followed us, when by our Sins we had justly forfeited thy Favour, and when thou mightest have made us as wretched as we had made ourselves sinful : But it is our Joy, that thy Mercy hath triumphed over Justice, that though we are Sinners we are not excluded the Means and Opportunities of Grace. Glory be to our God, thou art still seated on the Mercy Seat, and encouragest us to wait upon thee, in the Duties of solemn Devotion ! And that we are permitted to come unto thee, as our Father, in the joyful Hope of obtaining Mercy and Grace, to help us in every Time of Need ! Glory be to our God, that our Lot is not in the Valley of *Eben*, but that we are favoured with the most ample Discoveries of thy Love, and the most solid Foundation for future Hope, that we are not left without God, without Christ, without Hope, that the Sun of Righteousness has risen upon us with Healing in his Wings—

Wings—We thank thee for the Revelation of thy Grace, by thy dear and well-beloved Son, that he not only instructed us by his Precepts, but by his Example; and to compleat his Character, as the Author and Finisher of our Faith, laid down his Life a Sacrifice for our Sins; that thro' the shedding his Blood we might obtain Remission, even the Forgiveness of all our Sins. Conscious of our own Guilt, and of the Weakness and Imbecility of our Nature, we earnestly intreat to be interested in thy propitious Mercy: May we know that thou art our reconciled God, through Faith in *Jesus*: —May the Peace of God keep our Hearts, and may we abound in Hope, through the Power of the Holy Ghost—that we may, more and more, enjoy those spiritual Blessings. O thou, the great Source of Reason and intellectual Light, communicate the Knowledge of thyself, and of *Jesus Christ*, and the important Truths of the Gospel, and may they have a sanctifying Influence on our Minds and Lives; may we feel ourselves actuated by the warmest Principles of Love to God and *Jesus Christ*, that we may engage in the Duties of Religion with Cheerfulness, and esteem it our greatest Happiness to be doing thy Will! Purify our Hearts, and spiritualize our Affections, that no Seeds of Vice, that no irregular Passion, or Appetite, may corrupt our Integrity, and hinder our Progress in the Christian Life: But, having called *Christ* our Lord and Master, may we be more and more possessed and influenced by the Spirit and Temper of Christianity; may we distinguish ourselves as the Children of God, and the Disciples of *Jesus*, by being burning and shining Lights, in the Midst of Error and Wickedness; that others may be influenced by our Example, to glorify our heavenly Father! —To these important Purposes, we humbly implore thy gracious Assistance; if thou, O God, art at our right Hand, we shall never be greatly moved. And we pray, O heavenly Father, that all the Dispensations of thy Providence may be sanctified to our
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Spiritual Improvement and everlasting Advantage!—Known unto God are the Circumstances and Exigencies of all thy Creatures; thou knowest what is best for us, and we desire to acquiesce in the Wisdom of thy Providence, trusting in thy infinite Goodness. If thou art pleased to favour us with Health and Plenty, suffer us not to forget the Hand from whence our Mercies flow; but may we improve our Time, our Health and Strength, to the Glory of God, and the Advantage of our Fellow-Creatures!—If thou visitest us with afflictive Scenes, may we never repine at the Measures of thy Government; but be chiefly concerned how to profit by them.—Let them wean us from an undue Attachment to the Pleasures of Sense, and fix our Attention and Pursuits to Religion and Immortality,—O that we may neither be ashamed to live, nor afraid to die; but, by preserving our Integrity, may we enjoy the Testimony of our Consciences, that, in Simplicity and godly Sincerity, we have had our Conversation in this World; and when we come to close this mortal Scene, may it not only be with a calm Resignation to the divine Will, but with holy Joy and Triumph, as knowing in whom we have believed, and that he will give a good Account of that great Trust we have committed to him!—Let thy Spirit attend the Ministration of the Gospel, in this Society, for the Instruction, Encouragement, Comfort and Consolation, of thy People; and may Sinners be awakened and convinced of the Worth of their Souls, and the Importance of Religion!—We thank God for the present Opportunity we have, for joining in solemn, social Worship.—Lord, be present with us, lift up upon us the Light of thy Countenance, and make us glad with the Joys of thy Salvation!—Bless each of us, as we may be differently concerned; may thy unworthy Servant speak, as of the Oracles of God; may it proceed from the Heart, and reach the Hearts of those that hear; may they receive the Truth in the Love of it, and bring forth Fruit to the Glory of thy Name,

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Name, and to the Comfort and Happiness of their immortal Souls! Hear us, O our God, and graciously accept of us, in *Jesus Christ*. The Lord, our Righteousness, our ever-living Advocate, with thee our heavenly Father, and through whom we would ascribe to the only-wise God, our Father, everlasting Praise. *Amen.*

A PRAYER preceding a SERMON.

INFINITELY great, transcendently glorious, and for ever blessed, Lord God Almighty, just and true art thou in all thy Ways, and holy in all thy Works: Whom have we in Heaven but thee, and there is none upon Earth we desire in Comparison of thee; thou possessest in the highest Perfection, every possible Attribute, that can constitute thee the proper and sole Object of all religious Worship, Fear and Love. Thou art great and greatly to be feared, supreme over all Blessed for evermore. Thou art a Being of unrivalled Power, absolute, consummate, and indefectible Wisdom; of invariable, impartial Justice, and unlimited in Goodness. Thou art glorious in thyself; in thy essential, inherent Perfections. The Angels of thy Presence esteem it their highest Honour and Glory to celebrate thy Praise, and the Elders cast down their Crowns at thy Feet, saying, Thou art worthy to receive Glory, Honour, and Power. We thy rational Creatures desire, at this Time, to join the universal Voice of Heaven and Earth, in ascribing the Glory which is justly due to the Honours that compose thy Name.—To that Power, Wisdom and Goodness, which are constantly displayed in the Works of Nature, and shine still more illustriously in thy Dispensations of Grace, our Souls would magnify thee, our Hearts would rejoice in the God of our Salvation. We acknowledge thee to be the indefectible Source of Light, Life, Happiness and Perfection, from whence we, and all thy Creation, derived our Existence and Happiness. Thou hast called us into Being on purpose that we might partake of thy Beneficence and Liberality;

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rality ; thou didst breathe into our Nostrils the Breath of Life, and we became living Souls, capable of investigating thy divine unalterable Perfections ; capable of holding Conference with thee, our God ; capable of improving in Virtue and Piety, by which we may assimilate ourselves to thee, the bright Pattern of all Perfection.—We adore thee, O Lord, not only for thy creating Power, but for thy preserving and upholding Goodness, that thou hast made ample Provision for the Supply of our returning Wants, giving us all Things richly to enjoy, were it not for thy providential Power, thy constant unremitting Energy, universal Nature, must sink into its original Chaos. In thee we live, move, and have our Beings ; and, independent on thee, there is nothing that can amply satisfy the Desires of our rational and immortal Spirits. The Gods of the Heathens are Vanity, and a Lie, who can neither hear our Petitions, nor grant our Requests ; but the God of *Jacob* is not so, for by the Signatures of thy Wisdom and Goodness in the Course of thy universal Providence, thou hast shewn thyself to be the moral Governor of Mankind ; to thee therefore would we come, acknowledging and adoring thee who hast wrote the Characters of thy Existence and Perfections on our Hearts, invested us with the Gift of Reason, as a Ray from thee the perpetual Source of Wisdom itself ; and we give Thanks unto God, thou hast revealed thyself unto Mankind at sundry Times, and in divers Manners, according to the Councils of thy Will. Above all we would magnify thy Goodness, in that when Men had corrupted the moral Powers of their Souls, when they had acted contrary to the Authority of those Principles implanted in their Breast ; when they had virtually denied thee as their moral Governor, their Father, their Friend, and their God ; thou wast pleased, in the Depth of consummate Wisdom, and of thine own unsupplicated Goodness, to send from the right Hand of thy Glory and the Bosom of thy Love, thy only-begotten Son into

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our World with Terms of Reconciliation to offending Creatures; to restore Man to the Dignity from whence he was fallen; to reclaim him to his Duty, by the most noble and animating Motives of present and future Happiness: We adore thee for his Incarnation, that the Word was made Flesh and dwelt among us; we thank thee for the many incontestible Miracles he wrought as Evidences of his divine Mission, for the glad Tidings of Salvation through him, on the Terms of Repentance and Faith; for the Excellency of those Precepts which he taught; for the noble, amiable, and spotless Example which he set us; for the glorious Promises and encouraging Hopes confirmed by his Gospel.—While we thus make mention of thy Favours, we acknowledge they should kindle in us the sacred Fire of heavenly Love and Joy. But, O God, we are not sufficiently affected with thy Goodness; when we recollect our Obligations, our Consciences upbraid us with great Ingratitude, and we would fill our Souls with Contrition before thee, acknowledging our Sin and our Folly.—Remember not our Transgressions against us; enter not into strict Judgment with us, for we are sensible, that in the Eye of thy immaculate Purity no Flesh living can be justified.—But, O Lord, in the Multitude of thy Compassions pity our Weakness, and graciously assist us to regulate every disorderly Passion and Appetite to resist the most powerful Temptation to Vice, and to maintain our Integrity, that our Hearts may never reproach us.—Seeing we have such a glorious Hope, as from the Manifestations of the divine Goodness we are encouraged to form, may we walk worthy the Profession we make as the Disciples of the blessed *Jesus*.—May we transcribe into our Character those amiable Perfections, those god-like Dispositions, which shone so conspicuously in his Life, that others, seeing the Purity and Usefulness of our Lives, may be animated to the Practice of Piety and Goodness.—Never leave us, nor forsake us, but guide us by thy unerring Council; strengthen our

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pious Resolutions, that we may with invincible Ardour of Soul, persevere in the Paths of Duty and Happiness : May we consider what are the peculiar Talents we are intrusted with, which may be rendered subservient to the Happiness of our Fellow-Creatures ; and may Beneficence and Goodness be the governing Principles of our Minds. — Assist us, O thou Parent of universal Benevolence, in the delightful Exercise of forgiving our Enemies ; and whilst we treat our own Failings with Severity may we treat those of our Enemies with the most candid and generous Allowances ; and by thus forming our Minds to an Imitation of thee, may we arrive at confirmed and solacing Hopes of thy Favour, reviewing our past spent Lives without any uneasy Misgivings of Soul ; may we look forward with the delightful, transporting Views of the Smiles of God, and of Joys unspeakable and full of Glory. Be with us in our farther Attendance in thy Worshipping Assembly ; may it be with great Seriousness, Candour and Delight. May these religious Exercises by thy gracious Presence be to us Ways of Pleasantness, as well as Paths of Peace to our Souls. Hear us, answer us, and accept us, for the Lord Redeemer's Sake, who hath taught us, when we Address the Throne of thy Holiness and Mercy, to say, Our Father, &c.

A PRAYER preceding a SERMON:

O Thou eternal, almighty Sovereign, thou art supreme over all, God blessed for evermore ; 'ere the Heavens were formed, thou didst exist possessed of eternal, infinite, and adorable Perfections, whom no Eye can see, no Thought can fathom, no Mind can comprehend ; but though the most exalted Capacity cannot comprehend thee (the infinite, eternal Mind) yet from the Things that are made, are sufficiently seen, thy eternal Power and adorable Attributes ; so that were we to deny thine Existence or super-

intending

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intending Providence, all Nature would upbraid us of Perverseness. We desire, therefore, with the highest Reverence of thy divine Nature in the devout Contemplation of thy Perfections, to join with all in Heaven, and all on Earth, in ascribing the Kingdom, Power, and Glory unto God, most High ! We would worship thee as the God of universal Nature, who produced all Things into Being by the Word of thy Power, who supports them by thy unremitting Energy, and governs them with Power irresistible, with Wisdom unsearchable, and with Beneficence boundless and universal. Wherever we turn our Eyes we are entertained with the Signatures of thy Wisdom ; if we survey the admirable Structure of our Bodies, there thy divine Perfections of Power, Wisdom and Goodness stand confest, and more especially when we contemplate the Dignity of our intelligent Natures. We are led to acknowledge and adore thy unrivalled Power, thy matchless Skill, thy supreme, unlimited Goodness. But when we contemplate thy universal Presence, that thou inhabitest Eternity and fillest Immensity, and that compared with thine immaculate Purity, the Heavens are not clean, and the most exalted Services of Angels inadequate to thy Praise ; wherewithal then shall such imperfect Creatures come before God, and how shall we bow ourselves acceptably before the most High ? Thou desirest not Sacrifice, else would we give it ; but the Perfections of thy Nature claim our humble Reverence and Love, a sincere and ardent Affection of Soul in thy Worshipers : With these devout Dispositions we would now approach the Throne of thy Holiness, and of thy Mercy. From that Throne of Mercy, O God, condescend to hear us when we call upon thee, and when thou hearest forgive ! — O thou merciful, compassionate Father of thy Creatures, pity the Weakness and Frailty of our Natures, illuminate our Understanding in the best Things ; fix our Attention and Regard suitably to their Nature and Importance. We acknowledge all thy

Precepts concerning all Things to be right, and that in keeping of them there is sure and great Reward. Oh that we may act suitably to this Conviction of our Minds, as we have professed ourselves the Servants of God, the Disciples of *Jesus*; may we walk worthy the Obligations we are under as Men and as Christians. May we never fully the Christian Character by Actions unworthy of its Dignity, inconsistent with its Purity, and with the glorious Prospects it reveals; but may we with intrepid Resolution of Soul, amidst the Trials and Sufferings of the present imperfect State, perform our respective Duties, looking unto *Jesus*, the Author and Finisher of our Faith, who for the Joy that was set before him, endured the Cross, despised the Shame, and is now set down at thy right Hand. — May we copy his bright and amiable Example — in his Humility and Meekness of Spirit — in his Delight in doing Good — in his unreserved Obedience to thy Will, and in his perfect Acquiescence in all thy Pleasure. We desire, O Lord, to be assisted that we may better resemble that divine Temper. — We know, O Lord, thou art good, we are sensible that the Proceedings of thy Providence are founded in perfect Wisdom; we would not, therefore, with Sollicitude and Anxiety of Soul chuse our Lot in this Life; but with a filial and dutiful Submission to thy moral Government, we desire to be placed in such Circumstances, wherein we may do most Honour to the Religion we profess, be abundantly useful to our Fellow-Creatures, co-operate with thy great Design of promoting the Improvement of our own Minds, and contribute to the Increase of Virtue, Religion and Happiness amongst Men. — Forgive us, O gracious God, that we have not better answered the End of our Existence; that we have not better improved the Talents intrusted to our Care. — And assist us by the efficacious Influences of thy Spirit, which thou hast promised, in a progressive Improvement in the spiritual and divine Life, and in a Meetness for the

Em-

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Employment and the Joys of Heaven, that when we shall bid adieu to every Thing the World calls Great and Good, the Consolations of God may be neither few nor small; and we may then be received to those Mansions of Happiness which flow from larger Displays of divine Munificence and Love, and join the celestial Choir, in ascribing Glory, Honour and Praise to him that sitteth on the Throne, and to the Lamb, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

A PRAYER at the Conclusion of public Worship.

INFINITELY great, and transcendently glorious Jehovah, who art supreme over all, God blessed for evermore; we adore thee as the Rock of eternal Ages; 'ere the Morning Stars sang together, or the Sons of God exulted for Joy, thou existest independently and absolutely perfect; at thy omnipotent Word all Things sprang into Being, and by thine irresistible Power all Nature still subsists. Thou hast the sovereign, absolute Dominion both in Heaven and on Earth; there is none can stay thy Hand, or say unto thee, with a prevailing Voice, What doest thou! who sitteth on the Circuit of the Heavens, and at one View takest in the whole Compass of thy Creation; and as every Thing, that exists necessarily and constantly depends on thy impartial, everlasting Goodness: Thou openest thy liberal Hand and suppliest their numerous Wants. Thou art worthy to receive all Homage, Adoration, Reverence and Love, from all thine intelligent Offspring. Permit us, O gracious God, once more (in the fervent Devotion of our Souls) to address ourselves to the Place where thine Honour dwells, to acknowledge ourselves indebted to thee for every thing we enjoy, for Life, Health and Strength; 'tis because we have received Help of thee the indefectible Source of Life, that we are now before thee the distinguished Monuments of thy munificent Goodness; we therefore call upon our Souls to praise and

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magnify thy Name, O God, most High.——But more especially would we offer that Praise which is so justly thy Due, for those large Displays of thy everlasting Power; thy unsearchable Wisdom, and thine essential, unchangeable Mercy by *Jesus Christ*, and the Revelation of thy Will by him.——We may now clearly understand our Duty, because the Sun of Righteousness hath risen to scatter all the Mists of Error and Darkness that before had so much overspread the Minds of Men. We have the lively Oracles of divine Truth transmitted down to the present Time, notwithstanding the Attempts of base and designing Men to extirpate it; wherein Life and Immortality are brought to Light; many animating Motives and encouraging Rewards set before us, that it might give Resolution to our Virtue and Fortitude, to our Conduct. And as we have this Day more immediately had under our Consideration the Authority and Excellency of the Christian Revelation, may we pay a proper Attention to its Doctrines, its Precepts, its Promises and its Threatenings, and from thence may our Faith and Hope and Trust in thee be so confirmed, that in every Condition and Circumstance of Life, we may pursue with undaunted Ardour of Soul whatsoever Things are true, honest, just, lovely, praise-worthy, and of good report. May we consider this World as our probationary State for the Improvements of our Virtues, and preparing us for those Regions of Purity, Peace and Joy, whereunto we aspire: May we therefore cultivate a noble Disdain of all the delusive Amusements of this World, from the glorious elevating Prospects of a future Reward, rejoicing in this Hope, that after we have done and suffered thy Will here, we shall be admitted to join the universal Choir of Angels and the Spirits of just Men made perfect, in ascribing Hallelujah, and Praise to God, and to the Lamb for ever and ever.

Accept,

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Accept, O thou Lover of Souls, our Intercession in Behalf of Mankind ; extend, we humbly beseech thee, thy paternal Compassion to the most ignorant and benighted Part of the World.—We desire, with Submission to thy supreme Wisdom, that all thy rational Creatures may know thee as the God of their Fathers, and as the Father of our Lord *Jesus Christ* ; and that they may be abundantly blessed in the happy Effects of this Knowledge.

Put an End to *Pagan* Idolatry, to *Popish* Superstition, to *Mahomedan* Imposture and Infidelity, and, on the Ruins of Error and Impiety, establish the Kingdom of thy Son, the Kingdom of Righteousness, Peace and Joy. — Bless the Christian Church, reform it from every Thing contrary to its original Simplicity ; free it from all the Inventions and Traditions of Men, purge it from all that Superstition and Will Worship, that disguise its native Beauty and Lustre, and may the Truth, as it is in *Jesus*, more generally prevail. We praise thee, O Lord, for that Peace, Liberty and Tranquility we have long enjoyed under the mild auspicious Government of his late Majesty ; and that thou hast raised up a Successor to the *British* Throne, and given us such Proofs of his royal Capacity, that his Accession has been peaceful and honourable ; and we intreat, that the best of thy Blessings may descend upon our lawful, our rightful Sovereign King *George III.* may he put on Righteousness, and let it clothe him. May Judgment be his Robe and his Diadem ; may he experience thy Protection and Blessing under the Weight of Government, and after a long and prosperous Reign, over a free and grateful People, may he then receive a Crown of Glory that shall never fade away.

Bless the Princess Dowager of *Wales*, and all the Royal Family, render them the Patrons of Virtue, the Friends of Liberty, and Lovers of Mankind.

O Lord, direct and influence those who manage the public Affairs, the honourable Privy-Council, the Mi-

nisters of State, and both Houses of Parliament.—
May all our Nobility and Gentry be truly honourable
in their Conduct, and in their respective Stations.

O thou, who hast done great Things for this Nation, regard the present Transactions and Commotions in *Europe*, and so far as may be consistent with thine infinite Wisdom and universal Government, be thou our Sun to light us, and our Shield to protect us: Go forth with our naval and military Preparations; give Success to our Attempts, and thereby put a new Song of Praise into our Mouths. We would in the mean Time heartily sympathize with the Widow, the Fatherless and Distressed, where the Seat of War is; and most humbly recommend them to thy fatherly Compassion, intreating of thine infinite Goodness, that a Stop may soon be put to the unnatural Calamities of War.

Bless this great City, all worshipping Congregations, all united Societies for the Promotion of Religion and the public Good; may Equity and Truth be more honoured in our Courts of Judicature, and may there be a more general Reformation from the Countenance and Examples of the Great; and may each of us in our respective Stations and Characters, endeavour to cultivate those personal Virtues which may be suitable to our Christian Characters, and confirm our Christian Hopes.

Bless the Ministration of thy Word in this Place; may the Seed sown be watered with the heavenly Dew, spring up, and produce the genuine Fruits in our Lives.

Regard in thine infinite Compassion any that are in Affliction and Distress of Body or Mind, any that desire a Share in our Prayers. O thou, who art a God-hearing Prayer, be a Friend and present Help to all who put their Trust in thee. — Now, O God, what wait we for, our Hope is in thee: Dismiss us with thy Blessing, but wherever we are, may we remember we are surrounded and upheld by thy Providence; that our

our Mid-night Thoughts, and our Noon-day Actions, are alike known to thee:—Support our Minds in an humble, chearful Confidence, that thou wilt hear our Prayers, and accept our Thankfulness: We humbly ask it in the Name of thy Son *Jesus Christ*, who hath loved us, and given himself for us, and through whom we call upon thee as our Father, &c.

A PRAYER at the Conclusion of Public Worship.

HOLY! Holy! Holy! Lord God Almighty! Thou art the supreme Lord of the Universe! The Source and Fountain of all Happiness! We adore thee, as the great Creator of all Things, by thy Word were the Heavens made, and all their numerous Host; and, as thou didst create all Things, so they continue to exist by thy supporting Providence; and we desire to rejoice, and to give Glory and Honour unto God, most high, that thou, the Lord God omnipotent, reigneth over all; that we, and all our Concerns, are at thy Disposal! O Lord, possess our Souls, we most humbly beseech thee, with such firm Conviction of, and with such steady Regard to thy Providence, that we may cast all our Care upon thee, and, in the Way of our Duty, chearfully acquiesce in thy Dispensations; and, notwithstanding many of thy Providences are dark and difficult, may we be convinced that thy Judgments are right, and that Wisdom and Goodness are the Rule of thy Government! And we desire, with filial Duty and Affection, to acknowledge all thy Requirements are just and good, and that in keeping of them, there is great Reward! We are thankful to thee, for all the Assistance and Encouragement thou art giving us, for the Observation of them. In the Consciousness of our past Remissness, we desire to be humble, and to return to our Duty with greater Resolution!—Blessed be thy Name, that *Jesus Christ* came into the World, bringing Salvation with him; and that Repentance

penitance and Remission of Sins is preached in his Name!—Oh! Give us that Repentance that may be unto Salvation; and may we hereafter stand acquitted, though not as Innocent, yet as having an Interest, through Faith, in *Jesus Christ*! O Lord assist us to partake more of his divine Spirit, and, by a regular, amiable Conversation, to do honour to our holy Profession; and may our Light shine with such constant and increasing Lustre, as may promote the Practice of Religion in others! While we are passing through this World, amidst so many Difficulties and Discouragements, may we experience thy watchful Providence, guarding us from all the Evils to which we are exposed, and conferring on us the Comforts and Enjoyments of Life!—But we would not presume to chuse our Lot, most humbly intreating, that whatever our State may be in this World, we may still enjoy Peace of Conscience, and the solacing Hope of thy Favour; and that, when we draw near to the close of Life, our Hopes may be confirmed and established by a Reflection on our former Conduct; trusting in thy Mercy, that thou wilt make every gracious Allowance for the Infirmities and Frailties of our Nature, and all the Disadvantages that have attended our probationary State.

O thou universal Parent of Nature, when we thus approach the Throne of thy Mercy, we would offer our united Supplications in Behalf of the whole human Race. We pray that the Spirit of true Religion, and the Benefits of good Government, may more universally prevail! That the Gospel, in its Purity and Simplicity, may banish Ignorance, Superstition and Tyranny, wherever they have prevailed, and restore Liberty and Happiness to the World; and may these Kingdoms of *Great Britain*, who enjoy this glorious Privilege of the Gospel, greatly prize it, rejoice in it, and suitably improve it; and may every other Advantage we possess as a Nation, improve our Virtues, our Gratitude and Charity: That so our Privileges, civil
and

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and sacred, may be continued to us, and transmitted to latest Posterity.

O thou supreme Governor among the Nations, mercifully regard the present Conjunction of Affairs; give such Protection and Success to our Fleets and Armies, as may reduce our Enemies to accept of equitable Terms.

Favour with the choicest of thy Blessings, our lawful, our rightful Sovereign King *George*, may he long Rule in thy Fear with Prosperity and Honour, over a grateful, and a happy People.

Bless her Royal Highness the Princess Dowager of *Wales*, and all the Branches of the Royal Family, may they be illustrious Ornaments to their exalted Stations.

We pray for all who are intrusted with the Administration of public Affairs; may their Penetration, Integrity, and Love of their Country, qualify them for public Usefulness.

Bless the Ministers of the Gospel. May Love to God, and Love to Souls, inspire their Minds with Zeal and Piety, and engage them to exercise Diligence and Charity.

To thy compassionate Regard we would recommend the distressed of the human Race, all that are persecuted for Conscience-sake; that suffer under Tyranny and Oppression;—That are in a State of Bondage and Slavery, or confined in Prisons. —All who are languishing on Beds of Sickness, and crying out by Reason of Pain. —Any whose Happiness is greatly diminished and contracted by the Loss of a near Relative; such who are deprived of their Sight, or the regular Exercise of their Reason; and all who have fallen from a State of Prosperity to Adversity; the Lord in much Mercy regard all the Distressed, especially those for whom our Prayers are desired.

We thankfully acknowledge thy Goodness, that we have had another peaceable Opportunity of performing

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forming our public, social Worship; of celebrating thy Perfections, of supplicating at the Throne of thy Mercy, and of hearing thy sacred Word, for our Instruction and Improvement in Faith and Holiness! O that none of us may rest in the external Means of Religion, but may we be chiefly solicitous to acquire those good Dispositions, which may render us meet for the heavenly World and State. Dismiss us at this Time with thy Blessing, suitably dispose our Minds in the Time of Intermision, and bring us together again in the After-part of this Day better prepared, to do Honour to thy great Name, and receive Profit to our own Souls. We humbly ask it for thy eternal Mercy Sake, and as the Disciples of *Christ Jesus* the Lord: Now to thee, the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only true God, we desire to render the highest Honour, Worship and Praise, for evermore. *Amen.*

A PRAYER at the Conclusion of Public Worship.

O Lord our God, we would glorify thy Name, that we have been early taught to know thee, that we have been convinced it is our Duty to serve thee, and our Happiness to please thee! And we adore thy Goodness, that thou hast so clearly pointed out to us the Method of our obtaining thy Favour and eternal Life; that to accomplish this great Design, thou hast sent a divine Teacher, who was obedient to thy Will in all Things; who confirmed the Doctrines he delivered by unquestionable Miracles, and gave himself up unto Death, an Offering and Sacrifice unto God!—We gratefully acknowledge our Obligations, for that most excellent Gospel which he preached; for that spotless, amiable Example which he exhibited to our View; and we rejoice in the Promises of divine Assistance, which his Gospel reveals and ascertains, and in the Prospect of a glorious Resurrection to eternal Life!——May our Hearts be sufficiently influenced by these important Truths,

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Truths, and may we learn, under the Influence of this Faith and Hope, to purify ourselves from all Unrighteousness, giving all Diligence, that we may be found of thee our God in Peace !

O thou almighty Governor ! we desire to offer up our Intercessions in Behalf of all Mankind ! Praying that the Knowledge of thee, the true God, and of *Jesus Christ*, may be universal ; that all Flesh may see the Salvation of God ; that Ignorance, Idolatry, Superstition and Immorality, may be removed by the free Course and extensive Influence of pure and undefiled Religion ; and may all that profess the Christian Name, adorn their Christian Character, by the most useful and extensive Virtues !

Concur, O Lord, we beseech thee, with every Measure that is intended to promote and establish the Peace, Liberty, and Happiness of Mankind ! Preside over these Realms of *Great Britain* and *Ireland*, by thine especial Providence, establish the Throne of his Majesty King *George*, strengthen him, for the weighty and difficult Affairs of Government, and render him the happy Instrument of maintaining the Protestant Interest, and of securing to us, and extending to others, both civil and religious Liberty ! Bless her Royal Highness the Princess Dowager of *Wales* ; and all the other Princes and Branches of that illustrious House, with such Blessings as may tend to their public Usefulness, and their own real Happiness !—May the stated and occasional Ministration of thy Word, in this Place, prove abundantly effectual, in promoting Truth, Purity and Goodness !—We would also recommend to thy fatherly Regard, all who are in Affliction, from whatsoever Cause it is derived : Grant them Patience under, and Submission to, the Trials of thy Providence ; sanctify them, and, if consistent with thy Wisdom and Goodness, we intreat thou wilt shortly remove them.——Support the Aged, under all their Declines of Health, and Vigour ; oh may they patiently

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tiently and humbly wait for their Change! —
 Guard the Minds of the Young; O, that they
 may shun every Temptation to Vice, and may early
 learn to know thee, their God, and chuse thee for
 their Guide and final Portion: — Accept the
 grateful Acknowledgments of such as have been Wit-
 nesses of thy Care and Protection, and have been saved
 in Danger and Distress; may they have a firm Reso-
 lution to discover their Gratitude, by a steady Obe-
 dience to thy Will! Accept of those religious Services
 we have been now performing; may the Instructions
 of thy Word, and every returning Season for public
 Worship, make strong and lasting Impressions on our
 Minds, and be conducive to our final Acceptance:
 We ask all in the Name, and as the Disciples of
Jesus Christ our Lord, through whom we ascribe to
 thy supreme Majesty, the Kingdom, Power and Glo-
 ry! *Amen and Amen.*

A PRAYER at the Conclusion of Public Worship.

GREAT and glorious God, the kind indulgent
 Parent of the human Race, the God and Fa-
 ther of our Lord *Jesus Christ*, and the beneficent Giver
 of all those Privileges and Advantages which in and
 through him we enjoy; we, therefore, thine intelligent
 Creatures, would once more offer up our Praises be-
 fore the Throne of thy Holiness, and of thy Grace,
 adoring thee as the Author of every good and perfect
 Gift, that thou hast in great Wisdom and Goodness
 formed us for Glory and Immortality, and by the
 Principles of our intelligent Nature, made us capable
 of relishing the sublime Delights which Religion af-
 fords. Preserve us, O God, from presumptuous and
 highly aggravated Sin, from all Hypocrisy and secret
 Iniquity, from all powerful and dangerous Tempta-
 tions, that tend to draw us into the Paths of Vice
 and Ruin. Under the Influences of Faith, and ani-
 mated by the most encouraging Motives, may we
 chearfully and uniformly Practice thy holy Will, and
 make

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make it the Business and Pleasure of our Lives to secure the Happiness of our immortal Souls. May we learn to disregard the trifling Amusements of the present transitory World, and, with a noble Ambition, persevere in the Path of our Duty, to the End, that we may finally obtain that Crown of Glory, which fadeth not away.

In Imitation of thy universal Beneficence, we would extend our Wishes for the Happiness of all our fellow Creatures, and when we thus approach thy Mercy Seat, offer up our Supplications in Behalf of all Mankind; praying thou wilt illuminate the dark and benighted Part of the World with the Light and Influences of the glorious Gospel of *Jesus Christ*.

Bless in an especial Manner *Great Britain and Ireland*; protect the Protestant Interest; lengthen out our Tranquility, and give Peace in our Day, O Lord; But if it may not yet be consistent with the Wisdom of thy Providence, to put a Period to the unnatural Devastations and Calamities of War, we most humbly pray thou wilt avert from us the Triumphs of our Enemies; support his Majesty King *George* in the Defence of our Rights and Privileges, both civil and religious, may the Terror of his Arms add a Lustre to his Crown; may he, by giving every proper Sanction to the Laws, strengthen the Constitution; and by promoting Piety and Virtue, Liberty, Unanimity and Happiness, constantly advance the Honour and Dignity of his Government; and after a long and glorious Reign, when he shall be gathered to his Father in Peace, may he receive a heavenly Crown, and may his earthly one descend in his royal Line, and be worn with Lustre and Dignity, as long as the Sun and Moon endureth.

Bless the Princess Dowager of *Wales*, and all the Royal Family, with the Spirit of Religion, with true Principles of Honour, and a Love to Mankind.

Bless all Ranks and Degrees of Men; reform our Nobility and Gentry, our Navy, our Army; may they

they be influenced by the signal Favours of thy Providence to a more conscientious Discharge of their Duty.

Bless all the Families and Friends that are in Connection with us, especially the rising Generation; and we beseech thee to inspire all Parents and Guardians with Skill to understand, and Probity to execute their important Trust.

Succeed the Ministration of the Gospel wherever its sacred Truths are dispensed, and as the Certainty and awful Consequences of a future State have been now presented to our View, may it animate us to such an habitual Preparation for it, as may give us joyful and triumphant Hopes of a happy Eternity. Accept, O gracious God, the Petitions and Thanksgivings which we have now offered up at thy Mercy Seat, and forgive the Weakness and Imperfections that have attended us: We ask it for thy Mercy Sake, through *Jesus Christ*. Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be ascribed the Kingdom, Power and Glory, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

F I N I S.

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